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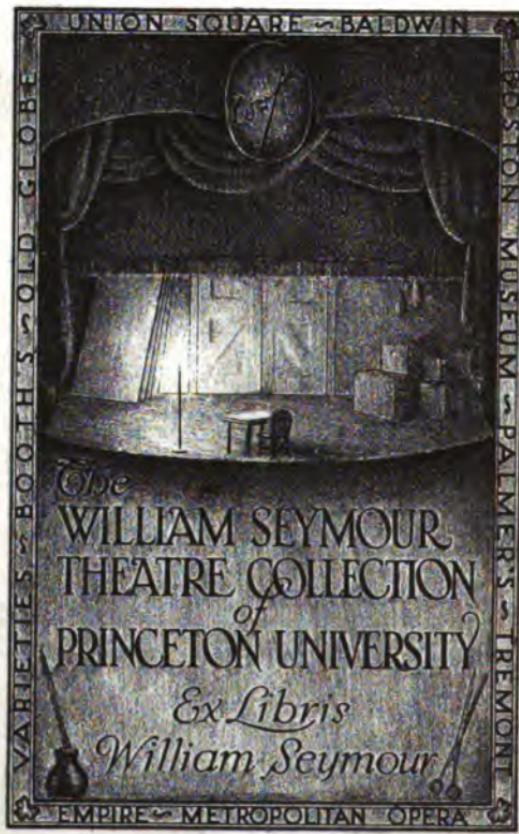
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THE

LIFE AND TIMES

Frederick Reynolds
1839
FREDERICK REYNOLDS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

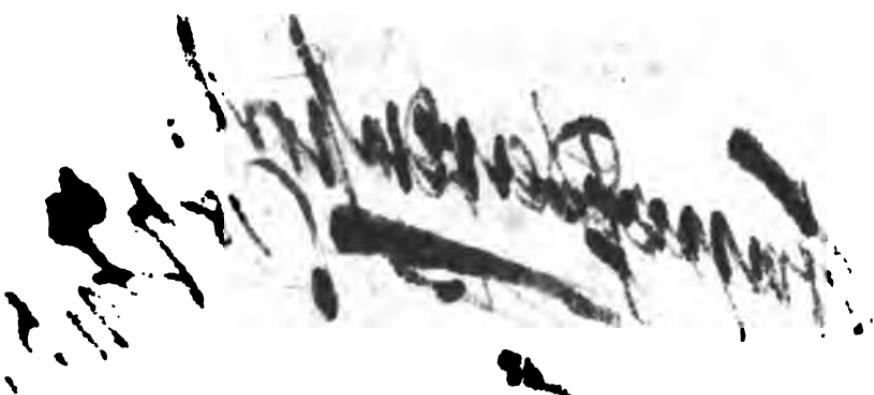
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:

H. C. CAREY AND I. LEA—CHESNUT STREET.

1826.



TO

**THE KING'S
MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.**

SIRE,

To your MAJESTY, as the liberal Patron of the Arts and Sciences, as the munificent Contributor to, and Promoter of, every solid and rational improvement, and as the Advancer of that peace, security, and affluence, which incline the minds of your MAJESTY's loyal and grateful subjects, to the enjoyment of all elegant and enlightened relaxations, (particularly to those of Literature and the Drama,) I lay the present work at your MAJESTY's feet.

If I were assured the reminiscence would not be considered either presuming or supererogatory, I would attempt to recall to your Majesty's recollection, that, during the morn of life, *the Prince of Wales* was the Patron of my first comedy; how doubly grateful then, must now be to my feelings, the gra-

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cious permission to dedicate to your MAJESTY, during this, the decline of my life, my first, and probably, last descriptive production; in which, if any single page should revive an agreeable thought, or induce one satisfactory recurrence in the mind of your MAJESTY, the furthest wishes are fulfilled of,

SIRE,

Your most devoted servant,

And most loyal subject,

FREDERICK REYNOLDS.

April 29th, 1826.

ADVERTISEMENT.

My chief motive for writing this book, was to procure for myself that occupation, which my medical advisers prescribed as the only remedy for the severe nervous disease, with which I was so long afflicted. I trust, however, that in this attempt to cure myself, I have not annoyed others; at least, I can truly add, no such intention ever even crossed my imagination.

If I have preserved character, that, otherwise, might have sunk into obscurity, (I mean literally *preserved*, not *injured* it,) and if I have rendered those, who were *entertaining* during *their* lives, not *dull* in *my* life, surely, I may hope to be numbered among the many, who have occasionally contributed to the "harmless stock of public amusement."

The subject of this work, not being solely confined to the Drama, but, comprising numerous anecdotes relative to fashionable, legal, and political character, I have been compelled (from the dread of unnecessary length, to forbear from noticing, or criticising any performer, *now* on the stage. Thus, I trust, I have avoided offending all: but, I beg leave to add, that, having for many of the profession, a most sincere esteem, I lament that this necessary rule compels me to pass *them* over in silence.

Having only studied at Westminster School, the Latin, and *never* the English grammar, I shall, I fear, gratify one class of readers;—I allude to those, who treating with utter contempt, the matter, character and spirit of a book, only toil to ascertain whether the *pronoun*, *adverb*, *antecedent*, *participle*, *et cætera*, be used in their proper places, cases and tenses.—If, then, these *inexcusable* faults shall be proved to have been committed by me, and if every line shall not be found, “Coldly correct, and critically dull,” I can only allege in excuse, that, I have many classical authors to keep me in countenance. Even Addison and Dr. Johnson have their snarlers;* indeed, until there be an avowed and allowed standard in grammar, even the oldest and wisest authors, may occasionally fall into error, and thus give a triumph to those,

“Who catch the author at some *that* or *therefore*.”

Warren-street,
Fitzroy-square,
April 29th, 1826.

* As a proof how much grammatical *Doctors* differ—Vide, *Tooke's Diversions of Purley*, page 491:—

“I imagine the word *for* (whether denominated *Preposition*, *Conjunction*, or *Adverb*) to be a *Noun*, and to have always one, and the same single signification, viz:—*Cause*, and nothing else. Though Greenwood attributes to it *eighteen*, and S. Johnson, *forty-six* different meanings: for which Greenwood cites above *forty*, and Johnson above *two hundred* instances!”

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LIFE AND TIMES
OF
FREDERIC REYNOLDS.

CHAPTER I.

INFANCY.

“ When a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations.”

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

Of my ancestry, I am sufficiently ignorant; and luckily, or unluckily for the reader, I can not trace it to the christian era, or even to the Norman Conquest. I have heard my grandfather say, that his grandfather was Secretary to Thurloe, Cromwell's Secretary; and had therefore, most probably, an important share in the infinite, but somewhat fatiguing, honour of transcribing, perhaps, indeed, of aiding to compile, those mighty folios of State Papers, that have often formed the delight of the antiquary and historian. Perhaps this same Reynolds, joining the military to the literary profession, was the man who dispersed the rebels at Burford, in Oxfordshire; and then allied with Jones, (another of the scribbling tribe) defeated the Marquis of Ormond, at Rathmines, near Dublin. He afterwards led over six thousand men for a junction with Turenne, at the siege of Dunkirk: which they took, and delivered to Cromwell after a victory over the Spaniards, at the battle of the Dunes. May, therefore, the reader, for the honour of his hero, believe that *this* hero was my ancestor.

Of my grandfather himself, I have very little recollection. He was a rich merchant, living in an independent style at Trowbridge, in Wiltshire. His house was a curiosity, which I will subsequently describe. He himself was a short man, who wore black silk stockings, gold shoe-buckles, huge and

massive; a large white bushy bob-wig; partly hiding, rather than hid, by the little smart round hat on its topmost summit; and a full suit of pompadour. Even in that day of absurd masquerade, this dress was singular.

He had a curious, and good-humoured custom of presenting each of his grandsons with a guinea per day, so long as they remained with him; but either from the antiquity of the house, or the furniture, or the strict and formal habits of the inmates, we so completely voted this family mansion the “Tomb of the Capulets,” that neither the kindness, nor the liberality of the old gentleman, could ever detain us beyond the third guinea. These are all my recollections of him: that they are not more extensive is no fault of his; he gave us time to stamp his image on our minds, for he lived till he was one hundred years old.

Of his wife I know nothing, she led a life of malady and affliction, and died before my birth. Her brother, Mr. Macey, was a merchant, resident at Lisbon: of him, I shall have frequent occasion to speak.

My grandfather had two sons and one daughter. The eldest son was most prosperous in the profession of architecture; Trowbridge and its neighbourhood, in their bridges and churches, still bear honourable testimony to the extent of his talents.

The daughter, Miss Reynolds, I remember as a prudent and excellent woman, retaining the vestiges of beauty; I recollect also that my brothers and myself used to be amazingly amused with her immense pockets, in which, by constantly impounding her hands, she purposed, I presume, to prevent others from impounding their contents.

The youngest son (my father) now remains to be mentioned. He was born in 1728. My grandfather having determined that neither of his sons should lead a life of indolence, articled him in early youth to Mr. Pickering, an eminent solicitor. When the term of his clerkship was expired, he entered into business on his own account. In course, at the commencement, his clients were not very numerous; but aided, as he was, by his father's influence, and supported by his money, and his own talents, they rapidly increased. What Johnson says of Savage may most appropriately be applied to him:—“He scarcely ever found a stranger whom he did not leave a friend.” He was a thorough bon vivant, friendly, and liberal to excess:

dotingly fond of society; of extraordinary humour, and vivacity in conversation; captivating in his manners, and handsome in his person.

A superabundant knowledge of law was not his defect, most certainly: never man with equal success had less. His department was to procure business; while clerks, neck deep in forensic lore, satisfactorily executed it. Consequently, he was soon on a rapid road to the highest professional eminence.

At this period, he was introduced to Miss West, the daughter of an independent retired merchant in the city. He was admitted on regular lists of courtship, and in a few months the gallant knight was rewarded with the hand of his fair lady, and with what would seem yet fairer to some eyes, a £5,000 dowry.

This sum, a little fortune in those days, I know was paid, because at the back of the marriage settlement, I recollect having read the following receipt in my father's writing:—

“ August 12th, 1752. Received the sum of £5,000, being the consideration money for the purposes within mentioned.”

Now, as many, in the simplicity of their hearts, may not understand for what “purposes” this “consideration money” was paid, allow me to state that a sale at Cupid's auction mart, is conducted like sales at other marts; viz. by paying a deposit, before the title is inspected.

After his marriage, his clients continued to increase; till at length producing him an annual income exceeding £3,000, he rented a large house in Lime-street, Fenchurch-street. He likewise bought the villa and estate, called Southbarrow, near Bromley; thinking that though kindness and attentions were the best fuel for love, a handsome establishment and worldly consideration would not diminish the affections of a young wife.

In the year 1754, my eldest brother Richard was born, and about this period, my father's intimacy with Mr. Wilkes commenced; an intimacy, that most materially influenced his future life.

Four years afterwards, my brother John was born, and in 1760, my brother Robert. There is an opinion among the vulgar, and particularly the religious vulgar, that men's pecu-

hiary means augment proportionably to the wants of an increasing family. This, by my father, seemed verified; for at the birth of the last child, his income exceeded that, at the period of the preceding birth, by at least £300; so that each of us may be said to have been born with an attendant £300.

At length, on November 1st, 1764, was I, Frederic Reynolds, (in the words of Tristram Shandy) "Gentleman, brought forth into this vile planet of ours, made up of the shreds and clippings of the rest."

I was reared in the lap of luxury, and by one of those unaccountable chances which occasionally occur, I became the favourite of the family, at a period of infancy, when it was impossible I could have manifested either an attractive, or repulsive character. Proving, however, as I advanced in years, to be tolerably good-humoured and lively, this predilection not only continued, but was ultimately confirmed to me.

In 1765, my father had Wilkes for a client, and towards the close of the same year; he was made country solicitor to Lord Chatham. Thus, at the same time, he was the attorney of the minister, and of the minister's most violent opponent; an extraordinary coincidence, comparable only to that of a barrister, who should be counsel for both plaintiff and defendant.

At the same period he obtained the management of all the Grandison estates, both in England and Ireland; of those of Lords King and Verney; the attorneyship in the banks of Haliday and Praede, Coote Purdon and Sayre, and in two more of the principal in London.—This was the zenith of his prosperity; his annual income must have considerably exceeded £5,000.

The family now consisted, of my father and mother, her sister (Miss West,) four sons, and also of a nurse, of the name of Morgan, a most faithful and favourite servant; who, having by toleration a voice in the government, both negative and positive, will hereafter form a most important feature in these most eventful volumes. Naturally among so many, there were occasional disagreements, which perhaps ultimately only increased the general cordiality; all, however, carefully refrained from quarrelling with me; and not a squall ever ruffled the sails of the *petit pet*.

My eldest brother was intended for the Bar, and sent to Westminster-school. As for John, my second brother, he was

of so eccentric a disposition, nobody knew for what profession to educate him. Even before his birth, the third son (Robert) was devoted to the Church; and I, designed for the Law, but not, like my father, for a " Gentleman one, &c.:"* no, whilst in the cradle, I was pronounced competent to the attainment of Silk Gown, Peacock, and Seals.

When I reflect on the political principles I heard inculcated in my youth, it is strange that I did not burst from the egg-shell, a perfect democrat. My father was a member of the society for supporting the Bill of Rights, and numbered amongst his intimates, not only Wilkes, but Sir Francis Blake Delaval, Sayre, Horne Tooke, Lord Mountmorris, and several of the other members. Consequently, our house was a little nest of opposition, where the radicals of the present day, might have heard the whigs of the last, daily and nightly predict the certain and immediate downfall of the nation, that still exists in increasing splendour.

The very first words I was taught to lisp by my nurse, were, "Wilkes and Liberty!"—Frequently, for this purpose, was my little personage placed on the table with the dessert, to intermingle my " hurrahs" for freedom with the diligent mastication of all the fruits and cakes that lay within the circle described by a pair of hands, as active in the pursuit of plunder, as any that ever graced the body of voracious child. Even in a gastronomic society, I should have been regarded as a performer of no small distinction, but in ours, I was admired as a phenomenon. This epicurean intrepidity, however, soon terminated the exhibition;—the tiny, chubby hands were approximated to the region of the stomach; then followed a face of anguish: and at last the forebodings of the parent, hurried the little disgraced patriot from the theatre of his display, into the nursery.

There commenced another scene; outcries, mischief, kicking, sobs, and all the other evolutions of a spoiled and froward child, intent on the attainment of an object. At length, as I expected, my pitying mother would ascend, and to sooth me, cry, " Stop, Freddy dear, and I will give you an orange;" roaring still louder, the young Hampden would reply, " Make it two, and I will."

* As Attorneys are frequently designated.

Among the following year's events, I can only recollect that my father fought a Colonel, and a common councilman; that he canvassed the electors of Nottingham, with a view to represent them in Parliament, but failed: and that he was made under Sheriff of London, to his friend Sawbridge; in which office his political opinions then insured him a certain popularity.

In my sixth year, the family, I suspect, began to be somewhat weary of their pampered pet; for I was sent to a boarding-school, at Walthamstow, under the direction of Mr. Mac Farlan, one of the whig historians of the reign of George the Third.—This school, I believe, is still in existence, and in good repute, as preparatory for the public academies.

At this period, my aunt and my mother were bent on removing to the west end of the town. “*Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire, hoc sciat alter*”—What pleasure can splendour bestow, if there be none, either to censure, envy, or admire it? In their opinions, they were formed for a display in the fashionable world, and would no longer angle for the admiration of citizens, and *nobodies*.

Against this attack, my father for a time resisted nobly. He expressed a certain conviction that a removal from the centre of his connections, would materially diminish his professional income. A friend of mine once informed me, that his grandfather's cousin, had been told by his great uncle, who had heard from his father, who had been confidently informed by his wife, that there was a traditional story of the existence of a woman, who had allowed herself to be convinced by *argument*. This may be true, but neither my aunt nor my mother, in spite of all their amiable qualities, resembled this female.—After a manful defence of each individual inch of ground, the vanquished hero was at length driven by the Amazonian army, as far westward, as Salisbury-square, Fleet-street.

After I had been at school about a fortnight, I sent home word by the servant who brought me the common douceurs of cakes, &c. an account of my entire dissatisfaction with the whole scholastic routine; at the same time, insisting on an immediate return. This was authoritative on the part of the pet; and consequently it was debated whether the application should not be wholly rejected. But the female branch again prevail-

ed, and the affair was compromised, by a permission to return for one day.

I found my father relating and complaining of an extraordinary circumstance, that had just occurred to him. He was solicitor to a captain in the army, in a cause against a rich brewer in the city. My father, the captain, the brewer, and several others, had assembled at a tavern in Fenchurch-street, to promote a settlement of the dispute by an arbitration. At a period when the examination appeared advancing unfavourably for the defendant, the door was suddenly burst open, and the brewer's partner rushed into the room at the head of twelve ruffians armed with pistols. My father regarding himself as a lost man, and watching the triggers with an anxious eye, like another Cæsar, prepared to encounter death in as decent a manner as the brevity of "the warning to quit" would allow. But his hour was not yet come. Without condescending to offer him the slightest annoyance, they passed him as if they were not aware of his presence, and closed and fastened the doors. Then deliberately examining the papers, and selecting those which in a court of law would have most injured the interests of their friend, they quietly departed with them, thinking they had found a summary mode of settling the affair.

But, unfortunately for them, their calculations were incorrect. My father brought an action against the brewers for illegally, and in an outrageous manner, taking and carrying away his papers. The defendants, knowing that no real value could be attached to them beyond that of the paper itself, made sure they should escape. But the judge, in summing up, stating that this cause did not concern Mr. Reynolds alone, but every gentleman connected with the law, the jury returned a verdict, with damages, of £100 for the plaintiff.

Lest any should wonder at the vastness of a memory that can thus accurately repeat events and conversations after the trivial lapse of some fifty years, I will merely mention, before I proceed with the detail of any further minutiae, that at that period, my eldest brother, Richard, then about eighteen years old, kept a journal, which he continued, with boyish ardour, entering promiscuously every kind of event, till he was of age. When he died, he bequeathed me the bulk of his property, and among his manuscripts I have found the data for the last, and several of the succeeding pages.

The next day I was returned to Mac Farlam's. The unhappiness and discomfort, I there experienced, were not more than I should now conceive to have been the lot of every school-boy, though then they were to me unequalled. Yet, there are men who refer to the scholastic period, as the happiest of their lives. I will not contradict them, for many of them are of distinguished reputation: "Let each speak of the fair according to his market," says my friend Tristram Shandy. If happiness exist in fundamental castigations for trivial offences; in a diet worse than that of La Trappe; in an envious restless contemplation of magisterial *gourmandise*; in writhing under petty tyrants; in a paucity of amusements, and an abundance of coercion, then "Huzza for the life of a schoolboy!"

I did not again return home for several months. At length, as I was one day sitting half sleeping, half crying over "Pro-pria quæ maribus," and "Omne quod exit in um," I was told that I had a visiter. I found below our coachman Harper, who submissively informed Master Frederic, that he was to return with him, and to go in the evening to see Barry act Othello. My heart literally leapt into my mouth as I leapt into the carriage.

The noble, the victorious warrior was personated by this great actor in a full suit of gold laced scarlet, a small cocked hat, knee breeches, and silk stockings conspicuously displaying a pair of gouty legs. As to his wife, then in her zenith of youth and beauty, clad in the fascinating costume of Italy she looked as captivating as he, grotesque. But, if during the play my delight was excited, where shall I find words to express its extent, when, at the termination, by Mrs. Barry's desire, I was transferred to a green-coat man, to be initiated in the arcana of the scenes, flies, and green-room. Then amazed, confounded by ecstacy, I was led into her dressing-room, admiring my conductor, the greasy jackets of the carpenters, and even inhaling with pride the fumes of the lamp snuffs.

I recollect that after the performance of Othello, I was much surprised by seeing a person put his head through the hole in the green curtain, and facetiously say to the audience, "Remember me to-morrow;" on which immediately followed a loud laugh. This person Mrs. Barry informed me was Shu-

ter, the comedian, whose benefit was to take place on the following evening.

To gratify my mother, Mrs. Barry invited me to sup and sleep at her house that night. Before our departure I received aside a strict maternal injunction to behave with propriety: I vowed faithful obedience, and in all probability meant to perform it; but the moment I entered the carriage all recollections vanished, and I could no longer maintain the decorum of either hands or tongue. The whole of our short journey I was enquiring, whether she were really the identical Desdemona that had just been smothered, or touching her to ascertain the corporeity of her existence. At so distant a period as the present, I can not decidedly determine the precise feelings that then prompted me; but I can well remember that several times, with a most good-humoured smile, and a slight blush, she checked me, exclaiming, "Barry, what an extraordinary boy this is!"

At that period, they lived in Norfolk-street, Strand; supper was on the table, and according to Barry's invariable custom, after acting, a boiled fowl: Mrs. Barry cut off both the wings, placing the one on her husband's, and the other on my plate. *Trifles* have caused dissensions between more kings and queens than those in theatrical life; unfortunately, mine was the liver wing. By signs and winks, Barry endeavoured to attract his wife's attention, but she was too much engaged by her hospitality to me, to heed him. Barry's visage began to approach the hue it had just worn in Othello, and Desdemona at length discovered this second jealousy of her hero. But the tide of luck in her affairs was that evening on the ebb, or in plain language, owing to the ardour of my appetite, the moment of rectification had just vanished with the wing of the fowl. Rendered irritable by pain, he made some sharp remark on her neglect, she replied on his gluttony, and they quarrelled.—*O euras hominum!*—She rose and quitted the room, and as I followed, "She left," as Bellario says, "a kiss upon my lips, I meant to keep forever"—That this kiss made a deep impression on my boyish mind, the following lines will show.

Next day, I returned to school, and my tasks were required of me as usual; but, I was an altered being; I had seen Mrs. Barry, the great Mrs. Barry! Mrs. Barry was never out of my head; she was in my cup at breakfast, my plate at dinner, and

my bed at night. I called the gawky house-maid Mrs. Barry; and when the master asked me to translate “*Improbè amor,*” I answered, “*Cruel Mrs. Barry.*” The consequence was, I was at length flogged; under the birchen influence, my mists vanished as fogs under the sun’s, and my sight was restored. Thus, I bore Mrs. Barry’s impression on more parts than my lips.

This year, my father held the office of under sheriff, to both Wilkes and Bull; a rare event in civic administration, honours and good fortune raining thus thickly on his head, he began to consider himself a second Midas.

Unfortunately, after events proved, that if there were a resemblance, it did not consist in my good father’s turning every thing he touched into gold. Determined by some clever speculation to realize an immediate fortune, he in a very short time commenced and concluded, the purchase of a sugar estate, for £10,000, in Dominica: expecting a harvest of, at least, cent. per cent.

I did not again return home till the holidays; and I remember, that on the day of my arrival, Wilkes was expected to dine with my father. As I had never yet seen him, I immediately anticipated the additional weight and superiority I should acquire in school, after an interview with a man of such uncommon notoriety.

He was the hero of the populace, and if I had not imagined him in the form of the handsome Gracchus, or of any other of the handsomest whigs of antiquity, the reason was, because I had not even heard of their names, not from the most distant idea of a possibility of Wilkes’ person being a point inferior. His forehead was low and short, his nose shorter and lower; an upper lip, long and projecting, and sunken eyes, squinting to a degree that their lines of vision must have crossed each other, within two inches of the nose. This appearance I did not expect; I was perfectly startled at his ugliness, and with tears in my eyes turned aside to reproach my mother for not having prepared me by a description.—Wilkes saw what was passing, and advanced towards me and my brother Jack.

“Ugly as you think me, little gentlemen,” he exclaimed with pretended anger, “there are people who are rash enough to assert that in affairs of gallantry, my victories are not *ten minutes* behind those of the handsomest men in England. So

henceforth, be not seduced by first impressions. Do you not acquiesce in my advice, ladies?" turning towards my aunt and my mother.

They answered in the affirmative. He took me by the hand, patted my head and smiled, somewhat disagreeably in truth; but so all powerful are the effects of a conciliating address, and polished manners, that in five minutes I could not conceive why I had been so startled; and in less than the time specified by the *rash* people he had mentioned, the whole party were internally convinced of the truth of their assertion. Here is encouragement for gallant male laiderons.*

He talked much of his domestic affairs, and said that though of the established religion, he had frequented sectarian meetings, for a considerable time after his marriage; "consequently of my repentance for that offence you suppose," he added, with a smile to my aunt and my mother. Then, speaking of his travels, he told us, that when at Naples, his majesty giving a grand dinner party, he among other foreigners, was invited. For several reasons, he was anxious to be present. In the first place, it would have afforded an admirable opportunity of reconciling himself with our ambassador, with whom he was slightly embroiled; but perhaps, after all, the principal inducement was his desire to see the Marchesa, Charles' beautiful mistress, who was that day to preside.

* Another time Wilkes said, "that he required a fortnight to talk away his face." But to have formed an opinion of him from his house, any person would have imagined that his own sentiments with regard to his person, were very different,—for it was all looking-glass. Not satisfied with large and small mirrors in every part of the room, the pannels of the doors were lined with the same material: so that though, according to the wish of the philosopher of old, he had not a glass in his breast to inform *others* of his actions, he had surrounding him, a sufficiency to repeat them to *himself*.

The house to which I allude, was at Kensington Gore, where to a party, seldom exceeding three or four intimate friends, he used to give the most exquisite little dinners that can well be imagined. His custom was to have no more than one dish placed on the table at a time; by which means the succeeding course was always produced hot. He was always attended by female servants. Wilkes, imagining that his conversation was less liable to be repeated by them, than by the males: on what principle he acted, I can not determine; but perhaps, being so surrounded by mirrors, on that, of the old French proverb, "The mind of a woman is like a mirror, which receives every impression, but retains none."

Living in the country, at the house of one of the noblesse, he found on entering the city walls, that he was considerably after his time. On this, he redoubled his speed, till observing the rapid gathering of the clouds, and threatening appearance of the sky, he left the open carriage he was driving to the care of his servants, and called a vettura; expressing his haste and anxiety to the driver. He had only just entered it, when according to his expectation, suddenly fell a most violent shower of rain. The vettura, which had hitherto proceeded most rapidly, at this moment turned into a covered court-yard.

“This is not the King’s Palace?” cried Wilkes, interrogatively, gazing around him. “No, Signor,” replied il vetturino.

“Then, why do you stop?”

“La pioggia,” rejoined the vetturino, pointing to the rain.

Wilkes imperiously desired him to proceed; but he flatly refused, stating that vetturas never moved in the rain.

“You scoundrel!” cried Wilkes, “and only to move in the rain I hired you.”

“Molto singolare,” replied the man with a look of surprise.

“In England, if you refused, you would be imprisoned.”

“Molto singolare,” replied the man.

“In England, none but children and cats fear water,” added Wilkes, in the hope of shaming him.

“Una nazione eretica, molto singolare,”* replied the man, in the same monotonous tone of surprise; and snow, almost a miracle in that country, beginning to fall, he fell also; and on his knees, with vehement devotion, ran through his whole vocabulary of patronizing saints. Wilkes, almost mad with passion, stamped; roared, raged, and reviled; threatened him with the inquisition, its tortures, and its officials. But a Neapolitan receives all the “brutto’s!” and “bestia’s!” that are showered on him with inimitable sang froid; at “briccone!” (rascal!) he only shakes his ears; and every other species of abuse and indignity, comes as a part of the day’s endurance, save a blow; which, as no man, who did not desire six inches of an Italian knife in his breast would dare to inflict, even Wilkes was obliged to withhold. So, il vetturino calmly pursued his devotions, till the brightening sky induced him to proceed.

* An heretical, and most whimsical nation.

But the dinner hour had passed with the storm, and when he arrived at the palace, the gates were closed. For a moment with longing eye, he gazed on the too opaque walls; picturing the gaiety of the interior, the Marchesa's beauty, and the innumerable advantages of the ambassador's patronage. At last, he tore himself away, cursing himself, vitturas, drivers, Naples, and Neapolitans; and vowing as a sacrifice to his spleen, that the dirt, the heat, the flies, the plague, the fiddlers, monks, and lazzaroni, gave him a right to read the famous proverb on their gate, "Vedi Napoli, e poi mori,"—"Vedi Napoli, e poi morrai."*

The conversation then turning on the duel with Lord Talbot, and on different events in his political career, he related several particulars. He certainly was a man of the coolest courage, and perhaps, really meriting the application of that frequently mis-employed dubious term, *brave*. What, indeed, is bravery? The soldier, who gallantly dares death in the field of battle, would probably tremble in the tossed boat of the intrepid fisherman, calmly staking his life against that of a mackarel or a salmon. The wretch who will boldly murder his fellow man for his two dollars, would yet shrink from the sack of an East India-man, through the medium of a naval engagement. The interesting female, who faints at the sight of blood, or, of a runaway horse, yet courts a certain death by her attendance on the contagious disease of her infant; while her valiant husband shuns his own offspring, to preserve that very life he would have fearlessly risked in a duel.—Yet, is not each of these persons brave? Yes; but each is a coward. Who then is really *brave*? Is the boy brave, who in love with the appellation, jumps from a first floor window to aquire it? Is the man brave, who gulps destruction in a pint of brandy, for the gain of a paltry wager? Is the suicide brave? No; to whom then does this anomalous term really apply? I should answer,—to that man who, with a proper consciousness of the value of his life, yet dare risk it in defence of his principles.

Whether Wilkes was, or was not this man, I do not feel myself competent to decide. After his duel with Lord Talbot, he wrote an account of it, to his patron Lord Temple. Of this

* That their famous proverb, "See Naples, and then die," ought to be read, "See Naples, and then you will die."

account, at a more recent period, he presented copies to several of his friends, and amongst them, he gave one to my father. From this most candid and amusing detail, a few extracts will enable the reader to deduce his own opinions.

In the *North Briton* of 1762, Wilkes wrote what Hogarth would call a “*caricatura*” paragraph on Lord Talbot, and his horse; in which there was not a word injurious to his Lordship’s character, though there might have been to his vanity. A few days afterwards, Lord Talbot wrote to Colonel Wilkes, demanding in *haut en bas* terms, whether he was the author. To this Wilkes replied, “requesting to know by what authority he is thus questioned.” This answer is ingeniously construed by Lord Talbot into “a declaration before men of truth and honour, that he occasionally assisted the paper, called the *North Briton*, with his pen,” and therefore, “any person by name, ridiculed in such an hebdomadal performance has a right to ask the occasional avowed writer, if he were the author of the offending paper.

To this, Wilkes replies, “that still being sufficiently unfortunate as to be ignorant of his lordship’s right to interrogate, he can not answer him; though he would any man, who might have had the curiosity to put the question in a civil manner.”

Lord Talbot then sent him a challenge, by Colonel Berkeley, afterwards Lord Bottetout; with whom Wilkes fixed the place of meeting, at the Red Lion Inn, at Bagshot.

“I there found,” he says in his letter, “Lord Talbot, in an agony of passion. He said, that I had injured him; that I had insulted him; that he was not used to be injured or insulted; what did I mean? Did I, or did I not, write the *North Briton* of August twenty-first? He would know; he insisted on a direct answer; here were his pistols!”

“I calmly remonstrated on this behaviour, and told him that I would never resolve his question, till he had proved his right to put it; that I was a private English gentleman, who obeyed with pleasure a gracious sovereign; but would never submit to the dictates of a fellow-subject, a Lord Steward of his Household; my superior indeed in rank, fortune, and abilities, but only my equal in honour, courage, and liberty.”

“Lord Talbot then asked me, if I would fight immediately? I replied, that I understood the appointment was to sup together that evening, and fight in the morning; and, consequent-

ly, I had postponed business of much importance until the present moment. I added, that I was just come from Medenham Abbey,* where the jovial monks of St. Francis had kept me up till four in the morning; that the world would therefore conclude I was drunk, and form no favourable opinion of his Lordship, should he kill me under these circumstances."

" His Lordship still however persisted, that we should terminate the affair immediately: so, seeing that I could not alter his determination, I rang for pen, ink, and paper, to settle my private concerns. I then proposed to lock the door of the room, that the affair might be concluded without the possibility of an interruption. To this, Lord Talbot violently objected, declaring that I was a wretch, who sought his life, and would be hanged, &c. Berkeley and Harris (the two seconds) were both surprised. I asked, whether I was to be first killed and then hanged? That I knew I fought his Lordship with a halter about my neck; and if he fell, I would not tarry for the tender mercies of the ministry, but make my way to France, where men of honour were sure of protection."

" He seemed affected by this, and said, I was an unbeliever, that wished to be killed. I could not help smiling at this, and replied, that we did not meet at Bagshot to settle articles of religion, but points of honour. I then finished my various letters, relative to Miss Wilkes, &c.; and told Lord Talbot I was entirely at his service, again begging that we might decide the affair in the room. But on this point he was inexorable: and moving towards the door, asked me how many times we should

* A large house on the banks of the Thames, formerly a convent of Cistercian monks. It was hired by several well known fashionable and political characters, as a house for revels, of which strange stories have been told. On the entrance porch was written in large letters; "Fais ici ce que tu voudras;"—and, at the end of the room, was a full-sized picture of the Medicanean Venus, with one of the club, habited as a monk, kneeling at her feet in an attitude of adoration. I have heard a story of two or three of the members conspiring together, and one night dropping a chimney sweeper, and a quantity of soot, (from the ceiling of the vaulted room, where they had effected a concealed aperture,) full on the banquet table, during the very summit of the orgies of their companions. Half blinded by the soot, and confounded by their intemperance, all voted their new acquaintance to be the devil; and on their knees, these valiant heroes attempted to conciliate the trembling and astonished sweep. Of similar stories, but more ridiculous, there is an endless variety.

fire. I told him, I left the number to his choice; I had brought a flask of powder, and a bag of bullets."

"Our seconds then charged his lordship's pistols, and we walked to a garden, some distance from the house. It was nearly seven, and the moon shone very brightly: we stood about eight yards apart, and agreed not to turn round before we fired, but to remain facing each other. Harris gave the word, both our fires were in exact time, but neither took effect: I then walked up to Lord Talbot, and told him that I *now* avowed the paper. His Lordship paid me the highest encomiums on my courage, and said, that I was one of the noblest creatures God ever created. He then desired that we might be good friends, and drink a bottle together; which we did, with much good-humour and laughter." Thus, did Wilkes conduct himself, according to his own statement; a statement, by which, though Lord Talbot may be censured for hastiness, he must be lauded for intrepidity and generosity.

Perhaps, of all the innumerable opinions that have been passed on Wilkes, that of Horace Walpole most accurately estimates the extent of his talents, when he says, that, "though Nicolo Rienzi, Massaniello, and others, attained a greater elevation, yet, that with an equal rashness, and after provoking and insulting the whole Scottish nation, Wilkes should not only have escaped their various attempts to destroy him; but without any pretence to gravity or decorum, have mounted, like the most sober citizen, all the steps of magistracy, to the first and most lucrative employment in the city, baffles all reasoning, and will forever distinguish him from other meteors of his class."

Now again, I must return to my own deeds, and misdeeds. After this interview, I became so great a little person, that the house was scarcely large enough to hold me. No spoiled child, ever encroached more on kindness and indulgence than I. Even the monarchy of my father could not secure him from the teasing of his rebellious favourite. In fact, ours was an aristocratical government, where the peeresses of the family claiming a vote, my faults never sought palliation in vain.

My grandmother, on my mother's side, at this time, desiring to see me, my father was not sorry to avail himself of the opportunity of ridding the house of me, for the remainder of the school vacation. Caprice being a component of a pet, he was

not more eager for my departure, than I; so the following day I quitted home, bearing in my pocket, a written promise from my mother, that I should prove a most agreeable and entertaining boy.

My grandmother's name was West. She had a good fortune, and resided in a large house, facing Montpellier Row, Twickenham. She was a most good-humoured and excellent old lady, a very devotee in all the pursuits of genteel senility. Her house was a perfect curiosity shop;—Indian bonzes, Chinese josses, shells, scraps of virtu, squalling parrots in smart lacquered cages, tame cats, and mumming monkeys. Add to this description that, excessive neatness and care were universally conspicuous, from the extra polish on the stoves, to that, on the face of the shining lap-dog: that, piping shepherds, dancing shepherdesses, attitudinizing Cupids, and similar micknackeries in china ware, together with gold fish in huge globular basins, and various other frangible ornaments and disfigurements, stood on brackets, or lined the chimney-pieces; and that the arrangement of the whole *derangement* was so methodical, that the minutest alteration in the position of a shell, or a scent bottle, would have ensured an immediate detection—imagine, then, the importation of a rude and noisy boy into the midst of the establishment.

Elected by suffrage and courtesy, my grandmother reigned queen of all the card-players of that card-playing place. To such excess was this infatuation carried, that the four old maids of Montpellier Row, her principal subjects, were chiefly known in the neighbourhood, by the names of *Manille*, *Spadille*, *Basto*, and *Punto*.

Every night, they assembled at one of their houses in succession; and on the first of every month, each also took her turn to give a grand party. I arrived on the last day of December, and the next night, in honour of the new-year, a fête of more than usual splendour was to be given by my grandmother. An unlucky period for a début like mine.

The evening at length arrived, and its principal attraction was Mrs. Clive, the celebrated actress, who having retired from the stage on a handsome competency, rented a villa on the banks of the Thames, of Horace Walpole, adjacent to his own seat of Strawberry Hill, and in the immediate vicinity of Twickenham. Owing to her amazing celebrity as a comic actress, and

as, during her long theatrical career, calumny itself had never aimed the slightest arrow at her fame, honest Kate Clive (for so she was familiarly called) was much noticed in the neighbourhood. Yet, from her eccentric disposition, strange, uncertain temper, and frank blunt manner, Mrs. Clive did not always go off with quite so much *eclat* in private as in public life; particularly, if she happened to be crossed by that touch-stone of temper, gaming.

Were I to live a thousand years, I never should forget the stately dulness and formality of this antiquated party. Nothing was heard, above the sipping and gurgling of tea, but whispering comparisons on their losses and gains at cards, congratulations on the others, and their own, "extreme good looks," and mutual informations on the state of the weather. Some admired the parrots, and patted the dogs, while others displayed their ignorance in learned disquisitions on the Indian bonzes, and Chinese josses.

Among the first that entered from Montpellier Row, were *Manille*, *Spadille*, *Basto*, and *Punto*. Huge caps, and little heads; rouged faces, white wigs; compressed waists, extended hips, and limping gaits, were the characteristics of this antediluvian quartetto. At sight of them, whether from astonishment, fear, or laughter, the cup, from which I was drinking, slipt from my grasp, into the lap of a lady next me. Here was confusion! All the stately corpses immediately came to life, buzzing about the scene of disaster. The lady screamed that she was scalded; I blushed, and begged pardon, and my grandmother almost wept over the fragments of one of her choicest cups.

As soon as tranquillity and formality were again restored, quadrille was proposed, and all immediately took their stations, either as players or betters. Impelled by my dramatic propensity, I stationed myself close to Mrs. Clive; now mentally giving the preference to her, and now to Mrs. Barry. Of this occupation, however, I soon began to weary, and closing my eyes, uttered a loud and protracted yawn. Then approaching *Manille and Co.*, I tweedled their chairs and their gowns, mixed their tricks by hunting for the court cards, and stole snuff from their boxes, which I continued to cram up my nose, till I had induced a fit of sneezing, violent enough to threaten the destruction of every ligament in my little frame.

Then, the paroxysm finished, more wearied than ever, I began to yawn again. In course, all these various manœuvres drew on me the black looks of my grandmother, but unhappy that I was, my destiny led me to merit yet blacker, before the close of the evening.

It did not require much discrimination, or knowledge of the game, to discover the loser from the winner. I soon observed Mrs. Clive's countenance alternately redden, and turn pale; while her antagonist vainly attempted the suppression of a satisfaction that momentarily betrayed itself, in the curling corners of her ugly mouth, and in the twinkling of her pig-gish eyes. At this sight, Mrs. Clive's spleen seemed redoubled. At last, her Manille went, and with it, the remnants of her temper. Her face was of an universal crimson, and tears of rage seemed ready to start into her eyes. At that very moment, as Satan would have it, her opponent, a dowager, whose hoary head and eyebrows were as white as those of an Albiness, triumphantly and briskly demanded payment for the two black aces.

"Two black aces!" answered the enraged loser, in a voice, rendered almost unintelligible by passion; "here, take the money, though, instead, I wish I could give you *two black eyes, you old white cat!*"—accompanying the wish with a gesture, that threatened a possibility of its execution.

The stately, starched old lady, who in her eagerness to receive her winnings, had half risen from her chair, astounded at her reception, could not have sunk back into it with more dismay, if she had really received a blow. She literally closed her eyes, and opened her mouth; and for several moments thus remained, fixed by the magnitude of her horror.

The words sounded through the room, with an awful clearness of articulation, that fixed every guest, (like the stone subjects of the King of the Black Isles,) in the action of the previous moment. One old lady's hand stuck midway between her snuff-box and her nose; while "*Basto*," who had turned the cock of a lemonade urn, stood abstractedly staring, as the fluid overflowed her glass, then the tray, and at last the floor.

At this sight, or rather combination of sights, I never shall forget my delight; it seemed to accumulate in despite of myself, until totally unable longer to retain it, I burst into a loud and continued laugh. This sound, that at any time would

have been scaring to ears unaccustomed, for at least half an age, to any audible expression of gratification above that of a whimpering and accordant titter, now by its strong contrast with their stilly horror, was rendered terrific. Recovering herself with dignity, my grandmother advanced, and with imperial frowns, expressed her commands for an immediate silence, in vain—like an alarum, whose spring once removed, will not cease till unwound, so my risible machinery once set in motion, was only to be stopped by satiety. In fact, I remained roaring with increasing glee, till a hand was placed on my shoulder, and I was genteely turned out of the room.

The conclusion of the evening may be imagined. I was put to bed; Mrs. Clive, treated with cold and averted looks, left the card-table, and shortly afterwards the house; and the polite buzzing, and gambling continued till an early hour of the morning. In spite, however, of her strange and eccentric demeanour, there were both benevolence and good sense in Mrs. Clive; as the following extract (though not a masterpiece of orthography, or punctuation) from one of her letters to George Colman, the elder, on the death of his wife, will exemplify:—

“There is nothing to be said on these Melancholly occasions To a person of understanding—fools Can not *feel* people of sence *must* and *will*, and when they have Sank their spirits till they are ill will find that nothing but submission can give any Consolation to Inevitable missfortunes.”*

The next day, I was returned as a bad bargain; with a verbal message, signifying that I was not found quite so agreeable and entertaining as expected.

At this time, occurred, I think, the quarrel between the Anthony and Octavius of their day, Horne Tooke and Wilkes. The principal cause was, whether Wilkes should, or should not, make my father Town Clerk, when the situation should be vacated by the death of Sir James Hodges, then a hale and hearty man.

The dissensions of these ambitious rivals, like those of the above-mentioned Antony and Octavius, led to a dreadful civil war. So far the comparison is good. The old quarrel led to the loss of the world, myriads of men, and oceans of blood.

* Vide “Posthumous Letters, with annotations, and occasional remarks, by George Colman, the younger”—a very valuable theatrical publication.

But here the comparison ends, for nothing was lost in the modern contest but time, myriads of foolscap, and oceans of ink.

A most abusive and derogatory correspondence was published in the Public Advertiser; in which, each party displayed talents for vituperation of no common order. Horne Tooke writes that the following conversation occurred a few months before, between him and Wilkes. Wilkes says, "I think I ought to consider something about providing for my friends, and preparing candidates for the city offices. Give me your opinion; who do you think, should be town clerk?"—"Why, is Sir James Hodges dead?"—No, but he is not very young, nor in very good health, and one ought to be provided against accidents." Tooke then objects, "That the man who might be proper one year, might be very improper the next."—"All this may be very true in theory," Wilkes replies, "but Reynolds has done so much for me, and is every day doing so much for me, that I think he ought to be fixed upon as Town Clerk."

To this, Tooke responds in the most decided manner, "that in his opinion the last man in the city that should be selected for such an office, had been fixed on." He then adds, "That shortly afterwards, I repeated to Mr. Reynolds the arguments I had used about him to Mr. Wilkes; and Mr. Reynolds told me he was convinced by what I had said, and should think no more of it." To this, my father publicly replied, denying every syllable of the other's assertion. Then Tooke rejoins with an insinuation of falsehoods, and dolorous comments "on the ignorance and presumption of such men as Mr. Reynolds."

Then Wilkes again enters, asserting that my father "was Tooke's sole benefactor," and that "no courtier seems more to enjoy the luxury of exaggerating, than the minister of New Brentford." Tooke replies, that the canon law only requires *seventy-four* witnesses to convict a cardinal of fornication; but not the *whole population* of God's earth could induce Mr. Wilkes to acknowledge himself guilty."

After additional mutual reproach and contumely, they at length abandoned this singular controversy, about, not only the Town Clerkship, but as Junius says, "old clothes—a Welch pony—a French footman—and a hamper of claret."

Thus, my father lost his place, according to the New Brentford minister's account, "through my zeal for the public weal." But the real cause of his opposition arose, it is supposed, from

a personal antipathy to my father, because as one of the members of the society for supporting the Bill of Rights, he had, in conjunction with Sir John Bernard, Lord Mountmorris, Wilkes, and several others, negatived Tooke's motion for a supply of £500, to Bingley the printer, then under prosecution.

Political, like theatrical squabbles, are usually however of short duration; violent at the time; but when the reconciliation comes, as Sheridan says, "their unanimity is wonderful." My father and Tooke, soon became as intimate as ever; and he again frequently dined with us, at the Adelphi, or at South-barrow.

I remember his saying to my father, who, according to his "custom in the afternoon," was pushing about the bottle, "Reynolds, you will soon be able to boast, like the Kentish gentleman, that you have drunk as much wine as would float a seventy-four." To which my father retorted in the same strain; and then added, that it was high time for him to reform, and take a wife. "Whose wife?" he asked, in his dry, cool manner, that while it made others laugh, supported the correctness of Wilkes' assertion, "That the patson never laughed."

With all his faults, however, he certainly was a most extraordinary man, and gained many popular rights. To him, newspapers are indebted for the freedom, with which they now report parliamentary speeches. He was also the founder of a school, as much characterized by its inflexibility, its erudition, and its sarcasm, as by its want of imagination, feeling, and humour.

About this period, John, my second brother, was seized with a cacoethes scribendi, and wrote a poem, called "*The Indian Scalp, a Canadian Tale.*" I, who was his bed-fellow, have particular good reason to remember it. My mother allowing us no light in the room, Jack, who composed by night as well as by day, would frequently smack and shake me, till I awoke, to hear the pompous recitation of ten or a dozen lines, interlarded with repetitions and corrections. Then he would exclaim with the most enviable self-satisfaction, "There, Fred, what do you think of it? Is not *that*, the *true inspiration?*"

When he had repeated them sufficiently often in his opinion, to stamp them verbatim on my memory, he would turn on his side, and resume his sound sleep; leaving me, from a dread of punishment in the morning, to con over the "*true inspiration*"

all night. When he had once, in the middle of a dark December night, composed the following verses, he was so elated, and manifested so turbulent a joy, that he alarmed my father and mother, who slept in an adjoining room. To the anxious replies of maternal solicitude, he responded, con spiritu:—

“ The stranger, and their crew, then storm’d the boat,
And all *at once* jump’d in, and all *at once* jump’d out.”

He then added, *con anima, sotto voce*,

“ He died, and left a paper that was seal’d,
But open’d, oh! the whole account reveal’d!”*

Wilkes, and his daughter, who were then on a visit at our house, were amazingly entertained by my mother’s account of this circumstance in the morning. Wilkes was then, certainly, one of the most popular men in England, and consequently had an easy part to play in the drama of life.

The slightest condescensions from him were esteemed by us boys, as adequate to continued services from another, and to even his most sarcastic remarks, we should not have ventured a reply. But his jokes were naturally so good-humoured, and so artfully veiled from their object, that while he almost convulsed others with laughter, he completely won the heart of the author of the “ *Indian Scalp*. ”

As for me, I believe on his departure, I must have sunk under “ a green and yellow melancholy,” had not his daughter, on whom he doted, and with whom he constantly corresponded, remained.† This young lady, had in her possession, se-

* This poem was soon afterwards published by Fourdrinier, of Fleet-street.

† During this visit of Miss Wilkes, I daily went out shooting alone; and never winging, even by accident, a hedge sparrow, I was much ridiculed. One day, however, advancing up the lawn, laden with a large kite, which I had shot in a neighbouring field, Miss Wilkes, and the whole family, expressed their astonishment, and highly praised this great sportsmanlike feat. —As may be supposed, I swaggered most prodigiously, but not long; for our neighbour Mr. Hankey, the banker, soon entered the parlour in a great rage, and demanded satisfaction; stating, that his tame favourite kite had strayed from his garden, and that I had been seen to *murder* it, at five yards distance.—“ Guilty, upon my honour;” but, as I had thought it a bird of prey, I could only say, (as the Italian lover said to the quiet stranger, whom, mistaking for a rival, he had killed on the spot)—“ I beg your pardon!”

veral entertaining jeux d'esprit, and memoranda of her father. Among them, I recollect the following:—Dr. Johnson, in the principles of etymology, prefixed to his Dictionary, asserts, that “H seldom, perhaps never, begins any, but the first syllable.”—Shortly after the publication of this novel, orthographical doctrine, Wilkes sent the Doctor this ingenious and amusing badinage:—

“ The *p-hilosop-her w-ho so rig-htly* made *t-his* remark, must have been a *p-hilologist, w-itn a c-hoice, t-houg-htful,* and *compre-hensive* genius, and a mind *in-herently appre-hensive* and *pit-hy.*”

The abashed *lexicograp-her* for many years, neither forgot nor forgave this playful attack.

At the close of my holidays, I was again returned to school. Though then ten years old, and with a perfect recollection of many anterior events, I can only remember the names of two of my schoolfellows,—the present Judge Parke and Turquand, afterwards a prosperous merchant. The late Mr. Degville was my dancing-master, and taught me country dances and Cotillions, till roused by ambition, I desired to figure in a Pas Seul. I wrote to my mother, and the kind lady, as usual, granted my request. In the next month, I danced a hornpipe, and truly, in a most capital style; for it so *turning out*, that my toes *turned in*, I appeared to be as fitly made for this agile performance as the little fantoccini hero himself, who was then exhibiting, and recherché by half the fashion, and canaille of London.

In the spring of the year 1774, I was summoned from school, in order to make a tour through Sussex and Kent, with my father and my aunt. During it, I perfectly remember the two following boyish, blundering occurrences. First, at Petworth, when viewing the Statue Gallery, I saw a plaster bust of Democritus, moulded from the antique. So much struck was I, with the laughing physiognomy of the philosopher, that unable to keep my hands off him, I gave him a familiar slap on the face; in return, he nodded, then tottered, fell, and scarcely left “a wreck behind.” Lord Egremont’s servants could scarcely keep their hands off me, while my aunt, as usual, exclaimed—“What a funny boy Fred is!”

The second was at Tunbridge Wells; where I insisted on going to the ball, and entered the room, even before the fid-

dlers. However, they soon arrived, and the orchestra being out of repair, they seated themselves on raised benches, at the bottom of the room. Then followed Mr. Tyssen, the master of the ceremonies, who, to my great delight, advanced towards my father, and shook him by the hand. "Ho, ho!—now I shall cut a figure," thought I; and at the termination of the first country dance, I begged permission to occupy the interval, till the commencement of the second, by my entertaining hornpipe. This, however, to my utter astonishment, was voted too ridiculous, and to my yet greater astonishment, my father presumed to scold me for the request.

I immediately sulked, and muttering, "Why then did I learn a hornpipe?" grandly withdrew from him, and flung myself on the extremity of one of the long ball-room forms, on which rested a coquetting belle and beau. They, disturbed by this "un de trop," suddenly rising, the equilibrium was lost, and one end of the form descending under my weight, precipitated me on the floor; while the other, "like a tall bully reared its head," circumvolved for a moment, over the heads of the terrified dancers, then paused, as if debating what was the next course to be pursued; at length, the point settled, it deliberately pitched with a tremendous crash among the fraternity of fiddles and fiddlers. Now then, who exclaimed, what a funny boy Fred is? Not even my aunt, for shame had made her vanish from the scene of disgrace. Abashed, tearful, with cheeks red as a fashionable dowager's, I rose from the floor to be called "pest!" instead of "pet!" and "little devil!" instead of "little darling!" In short, I was fairly hooted and hissed, for the first time in my life, but as future pages will evince, certainly not for the last.

Pope says of Dryden, "Virgilium tantum vidi;" so I may say of Dr. Johnson. One morning shortly after our return, he called on my father concerning some law business, and was ushered into the drawing-room, where I and my three brothers, eager to see, and still more eager to say we had seen, the Leviathan of literature, soon followed. All were, or affected to appear, struck with awe, except my brother Jack; who having just published his "*Indian Scalp*," was most anxious to elicit the Doctor's opinion. Accordingly, he seated himself close to him, and began:

"Any news in the literary world, Sir?"

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"Sir!" cried the Doctor.

"Any thing new, Doctor, I say, in the literary world?" continued the unhesitating poet.

"Young man, talk to me of Ranelagh and Vauxhall; of what you *may* understand; but not a word on literature."

We all smiled aside; but the author was omnipotent in Jack's mind, and, scarcely ruffled, he returned to the charge.

"Have you heard of a new poem, Sir?"—(No answer.) "A new poem, Sir?—A new poem, Sir, called" (with rising confusion) "called—'*the Indian Scalp*,'—rather—I believe," (confusion increasing,) "I believe it is tolerably—well spoken of.—You dont know who wrote it, Doctor?"

"No, but I do," cried I eagerly seizing the opportunity of making myself conspicuous in my turn; "don't I, Jack?—Indeed, Sir, he awakened me so many nights, and taught me so many verses, that, if you like, I can repeat you almost the whole poem, Sir, with the same rapidity and facility with which he wrote it."

Facilis descensus Averni," muttered the Doctor, and then added, in an authoritative tone, "ring the bell, one of you, ring the bell," and the servant was ordered to summon my father, on whose appearance, the Doctor formally arose, and said—

"When next I call here, Sir, show me where there is civilization—not in^t your *menagerie*."

Almost immediately afterwards he left us; Jack and I muttering as he departed, "What a brute!"

The conclusion of this memorable day is too characteristic of the family, to be omitted in this description.

About seven in the evening, my father's carriage drove to the door, empty. My mother expressing surprise, sent for the coachman, and asked him, who had ordered it. "Master Frederick, Ma'am."—"Frederick, who gave you permission to order the carriage?"—"Myself," I replied, pertly; "I intend to go to Ranelagh this evening." I need not mention the storm that ensued.

This was the first serious rebuff I had encountered in my characters of pet and pest, and of such salutary service was it to me, that, in my next Chapter, I hope to make my debut in a better line.

CHAPTER II.

SCHOOL DAYS, AND BOYHOOD.

“Bella, horrida bella.”

MOTTO OF LORD LISLE.

ON the termination of the vacation at Mac Farlane's, and at the age of eleven, I was sent to Westminster School. Now comes the first period, thoroughly within the unclouded compass of my memory; the former is principally a recollection of relations, so frequently repeated in the family, that I almost fancy I remember the realities.

Westminster was then, what it is now; not only in its fashion, but in its system of education. Latin, Latin—Greek, Greek, and the measurement of verses were our sole themes, morning, noon, and night. Every other thing has changed, either for the better or worse; but this, (both building and principles,) remains in *statu quo*. If Queen Elizabeth were to raise her head from the tomb, and with astonished eyes, search for an old acquaintance, she would recognize but one, I think, and that one would be Westminster School.

This subject leads me to the consideration of a question that has been frequently discussed, viz.; whether a public or private education be the most beneficial to youth. Having repeatedly witnessed the effects of each, I can speak with some experience on the subject.

For boys, who have little property, and to whom an intimacy with the great may lead to friendship, and, possibly, to preferment in their professions, a public education is peculiarly adapted, and may well merit the additional expenditure, as in their circumstances, their motto must be—“Neck, or nothing.”

For boys, heirs to rank and property, a public education gives confidence and general knowledge, that prepare them

for their entry into the world; and obviates the necessity of exposing them to the dangerous compliances of an obsequious private tutor, which excite their vanity, and repress all emulation.

But for the young man with a small income, yet large enough to remove the stimulus of poverty from his studies, a public education is apt to engender habits above his station; and in the prime of life, he finds himself in the world with no profession, slender acquirements, and a fortune totally inadequate to the views and pursuits he has contracted from his aristocratic associates.

To boys of great fortune, therefore, and boys of no fortune, a public education may be the more fitting. To those in the middle stations of life, in my opinion, it can not be otherwise than injurious.

But to resume my narrative, I must by way of prologue premise, that though there had been no change in education, there has been so extraordinary an alteration in men and manners, since the period of my entrance at Westminster School, that, unless I were slightly to prepare the present generation for the wild odd incidents of the last, they would lay down my book exclaiming, “mad author, mad composition!”

In my youthful days, the feature of the times, was love of fun, and eccentricity; which ridiculous as it may appear, died when the *powder tax* commenced. Character and dress go hand in hand, and whilst the gay decorated head, marking the difference between lord and groom, lady and housemaid, gave a cheerful tone to society; the present republican crop system not only levels all personal distinction of rank, but casting a sort of presbyterian gloom, makes us confess, that though now, perhaps, more “*moral*,” we might once have been more “*entertaining*.” Probably, I mistake effects for causes, and the dulness is the cause of the crop, not the crop of the dulness; but, kind reader, bear with the whims of an *old soldier*.

On my entrance at Mac Farlane’s, my dress having by its simplicity failed to impress due notions of my consequence on the minds of my school-fellows, I prevailed on my mother (unknown to my father and brothers) to equip me now, in one of more fashion and splendour. She, however, being unwell, deputed the superintendence of the whole arrangements to my thrifty nurse, who with many a struggle between her affection

for me, and her reverence for the yellow god, after various manœuvres, at length completed, entirely to her own satisfaction, a smart, pleasing suit. I also, at first considered myself strikingly fashionable, but at length some doubts passing through my mind, I threw over the whole a rough Bath great-coat.

Thus arrayed, on the evening of the 10th of October, every sail set, and every colour flying, I was launched, and started for Jones' Boarding House, in Dean's Yard; the mistress of which had assured my mother, she would pay me every care and attention. However, to illustrate the proverb "store is no sore," and as an additional protection against the attacks of adversity, I was armed by my brother Richard, (who had just quitted Westminster,) with letters of recommendation, to the care and kindness of Lord Buckinghamshire, and another *great* boy.

Confident of success, I expected a reception of the warmest description. My expectations were realized; my reception was hot indeed! On my entrance into the common room, I found a vast number of boys engaged in a violent theatrical contest, concerning the allotment of parts in a farce they purposed to perform. One party insisted on "*Love à la Mode*;" whilst the other objected, because there was no Jew in the company. Pleased and unobserved, I stood listening, until suddenly catching their eyes, with a loud halloo, and a cry of "New boy! new boy!" they surrounded and seized me. Then mounting me on the table, they all at once exclaimed, "Which of us will you fight?"—I, supposing they jested, replied, "Any of you."

"Oh, oh! you will, will you?" cried a little tiger-faced brat about my own size; "then here goes!"

Off went his coat in an instant; not so mine.—I paused, hesitated, and begged every body's pardon—in vain.—Regardless of my entreaties, they proceeded to extremities, and stripping me of my Bath surtout, discovered, to their infinite surprise and amusement, a scarlet coat, apparently turned; a spangled satin waistcoat, an evident reduction of one, that had been worn by my father when under sheriff; white cotton hose; large plated buckles fashioned in the previous century; and a pair of large black silk stockings transmuted by my nurse's patience into breeches, with the clocks standing eminently conspicuous on the centre of the little flap.—The effect

was instantaneous.—I, and the costume were hailed with universal applause as the original Beau Mordecai, and *Love à la Mode* was triumphantly ordered into immediate rehearsal.

“Thus bad begins, but worse remains behind.” Feeling, that this ordeal must be nothing to that of the entry into school, I hoped “to screw my courage to the sticking place” by a night of repose. But, the bed-room scene surpassed even German horrors. After enduring an inundation of ink from every squirt in the room, till I, and my fine clothes, were of an universal blackness;—after performing various aerial evolutions in my ascents from a blanket, managed by some dozen pairs of hands insensible of fatigue in the perpetration of mischief;—and after suffering the several torments of every remaining species of manual wit, I was at length permitted to crawl into my bed. There, I lay, comforting myself with the assurance that torture had done its worst, till I gradually sobbed myself into a sound sleep.

Scarcely, however, had the deep tones of the Abbey bell, tolling the awful hour of midnight, awakened me, when I was alarmed by the loud screams of several of the younger boys. Starting up in a paroxysm of terror, I saw at the foot of the bed a horrid spectre bearing a large cross, on which was written in flaming characters, “*Think on to-morrow.*” I gazed, till stupefied by fear, I mechanically closed my eyes, and hid myself under the bed-clothes. But, the spectre drawing them aside, and pointing to the burning letters, thrice shook its solemn head, and then vanished; leaving me in a *doldrum* of terror, which slowly but gradually subsiding, restored me at length both my mental and corporeal faculties.

The first, I amply employed in reflections on the awful warning, that so plainly prophesied the moment of my entrance into the school, would prove that of my departure from the world; and the latter, at the instigation of the former, in sobs and kicks till dawn.

Then I slyly arose, dressed myself, stole down stairs, opened the street door, and seeing a porter approach, stopped him, and tearing off the back of a letter, wrote upon it the following pathetic appeal to maternal love:

“ My dear, dear Mother,

“ If you don’t let me come home, I die—I am all over ink, and my fine clothes have been spoilt—I have been tost in a blanket, and seen a ghost.

“ I remain my dear, dear mother,

“ Your dutiful, and most unhappy son,

“ FREDDY.

“ P. S. Remember me to my father.”

This I carefully folded and directed, and then committing it with my whole pecuniary possessions, to the grinning porter, I conjured him in the most lachrymose tones, to convey it according to its superscription.

The porter was faithful, and Owen, charming Owen, (my father’s footman) soon made his welcome appearance. More dead than alive, with his support, I tottered to the Adelphi. The whole family met me at the door, caressed, and cheered me, and my aunt encouragingly remarked, “ What a really funny boy Fred must have been to have endured with so much manliness, calamities so appalling.” Then all immediately burst into invectives against the barbarians, who had thus oppressed me, and agreed that I should never again return to their den of cruelty.

But this commiseration soon began to diminish. “ Ease will recant vows made in pain, as violent as void;” and pride determined them to educate their pet at the first school in the kingdom. Accordingly, the time was fixed for my return, and after a few female cabinet councils, I was rationally furnished and equipped. At length, on the appointed day, I again departed, but under more favourable auspices, and with the escort of my brother.

I entered school, and luckily being able to answer in the affirmative the usual important question, “ Does your father keep a coach,” I met with very little annoyance. I was examined by Doctor Vincent, the second master, who placed me in the under third class. I now found school hours tolerably comfortable; in fact, they were delightful, in comparison with those I had to encounter at the boarding-house. There, lay all my misery. The number of great and petty tyrants, was almost the number of the boys: and I as the last comer was the last of the last, the slave of the slave.

I soon found my only chance of peace, was to establish a reputation for courage; and therefore I provoked a quarrel with an upper third hero, conceiving that it would be less disgraceful to yield to a big boy, than a little one; for I had previously resolved to yield, the moment I had gained the *quantum* of honour necessary to repose. We met after school hours, in the green; the ring was formed; I made the first rush, and to my surprise, my antagonist sank beneath it. “Bravo, *little one!*” was the general cry. However, I did not long continue the favourite. The fallen combatant soon arose, like a “giant refreshed,” and brandishing his huge fists, directed them so straightly and energetically to a concussion with the seat of digestion, that all my breath was dispersed, and I could scarcely collect sufficient to wheeze out the premeditated “Enough!”

Here, in course, terminated this pugnacious affair. There were malecontents it is true, and my exit was awkward; but I had gone out,—I had fought; and this being a small feather in my cap, the torments at the boarding-house were somewhat diminished.

But chance, or the kindness of the mistress of the boarding-house, shortly afterwards ameliorated my condition far more than my most warlike deeds. I was removed to another bedroom, where slept the present Duke of Dorset, and George Colman, who instead of tormenting, consoled me. To the latter, I was particularly indebted, for on the re-appearance of the spectre, he got out of bed, and gave it so *substantial* a drubbing, that it gave up the *ghost* forever.

Whether from being compelled to devote daily so many hours to scanning, and the recitation of Latin verses; or whether from a sort of contagion arising from “*The Indian Scalp*,” I can not say, but, like Jack, about this period, I began to conceive that I was blessed with the true poetic inspiration. My first attempts were confined to the boarding-house; but my fame so rapidly increased, that one morning I was stopped on my entry into school by the Minos, who desired me, at the command of the four head boys, to give him by the evening, half a dozen lines on Hayes, the second usher.

I never was in greater terror. Here was a flogging from the master, or a drubbing from the boys. However, as I knew the will of the latter was law, I prepared to obey them.

How to commence was then the difficulty, for I knew nothing of my subject, but that he was nick-named Buck Hayes, and had gained by his poetry several prizes, at either Oxford or Cambridge. On these scanty data, therefore, I proceeded, and with tears in my eyes, delivered to my commanders the following lines:—

“ Hayes affects to be the *knowing*,
 Because he wrote a very bad poem,
 And because he had the luck
 To win the prizes, he affects the *buck*—
 But if you'd rise in either school or church,
 Catch not at *laurel*, Hayes, but stick to *birch*!”

For these absurdities, *birch* had nearly caught me in reality; for my commanders, from mischief, showed them to Hayes himself. He, in course, reported me to Dr. Vincent, who called for a rod, and prepared to realize instanter all my worst forebodings; but suddenly relenting, he gravely said, “Boy, boy, you are the Merry-Andrew of the school,” and then ordered me to learn treble the usual number of Latin verses by the following morning.

Still, this event did not in the least damp my cacoethes; for shortly afterwards, Dr. Smith, the head master, giving as a thesis for Latin epigrams, the following line from Virgil:—

“ *Nescia mens hominum fati, sortisq[ue] futur[ae]*;”

I conceitedly chose to compose it in English, and wrote, in allusion to the then recent defeat, at Saratoga, of General Burgoyne, by General Gates, the following distich:—

“ Burgoyne, alas! unseeing future fates,
 Could cut his way through woods, but not through GATES.”

The Doctor, as a token of approbation, gave me a silver two-pence; for which, according to custom, old Jones, the master of the boarding-house, presented me with four shillings. Thus, was my course through life marked out for me; for, from that moment, I resolved that there was no profession so easy and productive, as that of a poet.

The next thesis was,

“ *Te ducit species.*”

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Here, again, I purposed to cut a figure; but was eclipsed by another boy, who recited to the Doctor the following whimsical distich; and gained the prize—

“Perhaps by you, my buckles are as *silver* rated;
Te ducit species—they are only *plated*.”

As an eccentric actor once concluded a somewhat personal story, saying, “I will not mention the gentleman’s name, because, he is now *Chancellor of the Exchequer*,”—so will not I mention the name of the clever Westminster boy, who wrote this lively couplet, because, he is now *Chief Justice of Chester*.

Hours passed like months, but, however, the holidays at length arrived, and I returned home, but not to Salisbury-square. My mother and my aunt, like the compass, bent on a still farther variation to the westward, had persuaded my father to take a house in the Adelphi.

I know not whether I, or my mother was most rejoiced at my return. With the Adelphi, I was delighted. The Thames, the wherries, and boating, were all novelties to me. Day after day, I ran over the still unfinished buildings in John-street, incapable of fatigue, deeming myself a man of bustle and business; now stopping with the workmen, to chop wood, and my fingers, and then running to chatter in the technical terms of carpentry to Terence, the foreman; who, answering all my boyish inquiries with incessant good-humour, I was scarcely ever so happy as in his company.

My father, would occasionally make me his companion in his walks, when not too much occupied by his profession. The day before the commencement of the Westminster plays, he took me to Prince’s Court, to see Wilkes. My father and he conversed for a short time apart, on business, and then, as I afterwards learnt, concerning me and my education. This, led to a curious equivoque, for Wilkes turning suddenly towards me, said, in his usual urbane manner, “Well, my boy, how far have you got?” I, whose mind was wholly occupied by our late removal from Salisbury-square, replied, “As far as the Adelphi, Sir.”

“Upon my word,” rejoined Wilkes, “your son, Reynolds, is very forward for his age.”

"Forward, indeed!" cried my father, smiling; "Why Fred, you young rogue, you know nothing of Terence?"

"Don't I," replied I, rather snappishly, "why you yourself saw me with him, this very day, and I heard him tell you, that your upper story was in a very bad condition."

"Ho, ho," said my father, laughing heartily; "I understand the matter now; he means Terence, the foreman to the three Adams, who built the *Adelphi*."

"I see," Wilkes replied, joining my father in his laugh; then added, "If his blunders be always as amusing as the present, the more frequently Miss Wilkes and I see our young friend the better."*

The next day we went to Southbarrow, and my father having law business to transact at Hayes, he allowed me to ride with him, purposely to see the great lord Chatham, who was then there. His lordship, I remember, was very kind to me, and on quitting the room with my father, desired his son William Pitt, then a boy about four years older than I was, to remain with, and amuse me, during their absence.

Somehow, I did not feel quite bold on being left alone with this young gentleman. For a time, he never spoke, and I never spoke, till at last, slyly glancing at him, to learn who was to commence the conversation, and observing mischief gathering in the corner of his eye, I retired to the window; "But gained nothing by my motion." He silently approached, and sharply tapping me on the shoulder, cried jeeringly, as he pointed to my feet, "So, my little hero, do you usually walk in spurs?"—

"Walk?" I replied; "I rode here on my own pony."

"Your *own* pony!"—he repeated with affected astonishment; "Your *own* pony?—upon my word?—and pray, what colour may he be?—probably *blue, pink, or pompadour*?"

At this moment, the present Lord Chatham entering the room, the tormentor exclaimed, "I give you joy, brother, for you are now standing in the presence of no less a personage than the proprietor of the *pompadour pony*!"

His brother frowned at him, and I was bursting with rage

* A member of the House of Commons, not long deceased, whenever he quoted Latin, used to translate the passage "for the benefit of the country gentlemen"—so, for their benefit, and that of their ladies, allow me to state that Terence (not the above mentioned carpenter) but the Carthaginian, wrote a comedy called the *Adelphi*.

and vexation, when he coolly turned towards me, and said, “Your life is too valuable to be sported with. I hope you ride *in armour?*”

“Be quiet, William—don’t trifl so,” cried his brother.

“I am serious, John,” he replied; “and if for the benefit of the present race, he will do his utmost to preserve his life, for I will take care it shall not be lost to posterity, for as my father intends writing a history of the late and present reigns, mark my words, my little proprietor, I will find a *niche* for you, and your pompadour pony, in the *History of England*.”

I could no longer restrain my spleen, and fairly stamped with passion to his great amusement. At this moment, the door opening, my facetious tormentor instantly cantered to the opposite side of the room, after the manner of a *broken down* pony, and then placing his finger on his lips, as if to forbid all tale-telling, disappeared at the other entrance.

In course, every feeling of rage was smothered in the presence of the great Lord Chatham, and my father having taken his leave, mounted his horse, and trotted through the Park; I following him on my pony, and delighting in my escape. But as I reached the gates, I was crossed in my path “by the fiend again”—but, agreeably crossed, for he shook me by the hand with much good-humour, playfully asked my pardon, and then added, patting my pony, “He should at all times be happy to find both of us accommodation at Hayes, instead of a *niche* in the *History of England*.”

This incident remained fixed on my mind; and for a few hours, even Terence was forgotten in my speculations on the pleasures of Hayes; in fact, I thought of nothing else till the next novelty, a strange adventure that befel my brother Richard, and which made as deep an impression.

In the month of April, soon after Richard had been called to the bar, as he was preparing to go to a dinner party in Pall-mall, a porter knocked at the door, and left a letter, directed in a strange hand, to Richard Reynolds, Esq. John-street, Adelphi. The contents were as follow:—

“Sir,

“Last night, after Captain Smith left the Bedford, a strange gentleman publicly proclaimed him as ‘a black-legs.’ This being told the Captain by some good-natured friend, the former called at the Bedford this morning, and

learnt his accuser's name, was Mr. Richard Reynolds. Now, as I have often had the pleasure of conversing with you at that coffee-house, and supposing you the man implicated, I feel myself bound to give you this information. However, as the enraged Captain neither knows your person nor address, I trust, he will not be able to effect a meeting.

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Your obedient servant,

“ A. B.”

“ P. S. Though the Captain does not know your abode, he suspects it to be in the neighbourhood of the Adelphi.”

Surprised, and somewhat amazed, by the communication of this *really* good-natured anonymous correspondent, my brother showed it to my father; who, soon perceiving the whole to be a mistake, (for he had not been at the Bedford for more than a month) advised him to think of it no more. Conceding to the justice of this advice, my brother proceeded to join his dinner party.

My mother and my aunt were, as may be supposed, much shocked, and only consoled themselves by the reflection, that though the Captain knew my brother's name, he did not know his person.

After dinner, my brother, “ hot with the Tuscan grape, and high in blood,” accompanied his host to his box at the Opera. For a short time, the dancing of Baccelli solely engaged Richard's attention; but it was suddenly withdrawn, by something in the adjoining box far more attractive. This *something*, was an extremely handsome woman, the wife of Sir Charles ——, a Baronet of fashion and fortune. At her, Richard gazed, and glanced, and sighed so deeply, that he rendered himself not only ridiculously conspicuous to the object of his idolatry, but to her whole party; amongst which, was rather a rare character at the Opera,—a loving, jealous husband.

The Ballêt being concluded, the lady and her friends left the box, followed at a respectful distance, by the enamoured, tipsy Richard. They entered the hall, the carriage was announced, and he was on the point of losing his fair innamorata when the violent pressure of the crowd momentarily separated her from her party. “ Seizing the golden opportunity,” Richard gallantly advanced, and triumphantly handed her into the

carriage; when forgetful of his usual good taste and good manners, he placed his foot on the step with the intention of accompanying her.

At this unlucky moment, “the green eyed monster,” the furious husband, darted forward, and grasped his arm; high words ensued, and cards were exchanged; Richard putting into his pocket that of “Sir Charles —, Lower Grosvenor-street,” and the husband putting into his pocket that of “Mr. Richard Reynolds, John-street, Adelphi.” After this preamble, to another exchange, I mean, to that of shots, Sir Charles —, instead of getting into the carriage, proceeded towards White’s in a fit of spleen, leaving his wife to return alone.

The disappointed Richard, in the interim, also attempted to bend his way homewards, but from the increasing effects of the wine, he lost all recollection. After wandering for some time in St. James’s-square, he at length, completely confused and exhausted, seated himself under a portico, and instantly fell asleep. In this condition, a watchman discovered him, and after several vain attempts to awaken him, committed him to the guardianship of the chairmen of an empty sedan that was passing at the moment. Into this, with some difficulty, they had placed their torpid load, and were preparing to depart, when one of the chairmen cried to the watchman, “Paddy, Paddy, who is he, and where is the direction post?”—

“True, Phalim,” added his brother in portage, “at this rate, we may come out with him at the world’s end, and be no jot the richer or wiser.”

“Faith, he is no acquaintance of mine, honies,” replied the watchman; “but if on searching him, I find nothing of the jontleman about him, by the pow’rs, I’ll coolly house him with the constable of the night.”

The search commenced—no letter—no memorandum—poor Richard was in dreadful peril, when a solitary card was discovered, and by the light of his lantern, the watchman read aloud, “Sir Charles —, Lower Grosvenor-street.” This was the passport, and away they trotted, much gratified by so sufficient and satisfactory a direction.

Arriving in the above-mentioned street at one o’clock in the morning, with the supposed Baronet, (and drawn blinds, to prevent an exposition of his humiliating situation,) the chair-

man knocked, and a servant appeared. On their inquiry, whether that were the house of Sir Charles ——, and receiving an answer in the affirmative, the chair was conveyed into the hall. The paddies explained to the servant how, and where they had found his master, and showed his card.

As this was an unusual occurrence, the servant alarmed, feared to disturb the Baronet, till he had received the instructions of her Ladyship; who having awaited the return of her husband a considerable time, had at length retired to her room. The servant therefore sent one of her women to inform her of his master's arrival, and then with the assistance of the chairmen, removed the chair into the library, when they themselves were sent below to wait for further orders.

The *minor* performers having left the stage, the *principal* now remained solus. My brother having awakened, and raised the lid of the chair, and finding himself housed, at first, naturally thought some kind person had conducted him home —but great were both his surprise and alarm, when he discovered that he was in a strange house.

Eager for explanation, he was proceeding to ring the bell, when he heard a loud knocking at the street door, and at the same instant, the loved cause of his pursuit, the identical fair one of the Opera, rushed into the room. Breathless with joy and astonishment, he stood motionless; when the Baronet's wife, deceived by the imperfect light of a single wax taper, and half blinded by her agitation, rushed into her supposed husband's arms, who, "*nothing loth*," was about to return her embrace, when lo! the *real husband* entered, and stood aghast. Rage deprived him of utterance; his wife, confounded by her error, seized her husband's hand, and wept in silent entreaty; while Richard completely sobered, explained, and apologized.

By degrees, the Baronet yielded to the *naiveté* of my brother's account, his own reflections, and the corroborating testimony of the chairmen; when suddenly, his passion again broke forth, and he exclaimed, "This is not the only provocation I have received from you. Do you know a Captain Smith, Sir?" "I have heard," replied my brother, "of such a man this evening, for the ——" "Hear me then, Sir!" interrupted the impetuous Baronet; "passing up St. James'-street not half an hour ago, and assisting in emancipating this

Captain Smith from a ring of pickpockets, he would not leave me, till he was informed where he was to call to return his thanks. I gave him my own address as I thought, but unluckily it proved to be *your* card. He had no sooner glanced his eye over it, than he cried, "So, Sir, I have found you at last!" and was proceeding to use the most intemperate language, when fortunately for both parties, a friend explained to him his error; otherwise, Sir, *there* I should have been as much indebted to Mr. Richard Reynolds for the loan of his name and character, as I am *here* for the unexpected pleasure of his company."

To conclude, it was at length determined to postpone all further discussion till the morrow; Richard pledging his honour that the Baronet should then, one way or another, have satisfaction. My brother kept his word, for having gone to the Bedford, and learnt from Captain Smith himself, that another Mr. Richard Reynolds had been his traducer, he and the Captain proceeded together to Grosvenor-street; where, instead of the anticipated exchange of shots, they exchanged apologies, and there the matter amicably terminated.

During the summer of this year, my father and Wilkes, on their way to Bath, paid an unexpected visit to my grandfather's sombre, sober mansion at Trowbridge. On the evening of their arrival, mobs paraded the street, particularly before the old gentleman's door, demanding the illumination of his windows, and huzzaing for "Wilkes, Reynolds, 45," and Liberty!"

* On recurring to the *North Briton*, and the celebrated number of 45, I am surprised how so dull an attack on the King's Speech, could have excited such extraordinary animosity in the government. There is more satire, imagination, and vigour, in one letter of Junius, than in the whole of the *North Briton* collectively. Though Wilkes might have chosen to have profited by all the unexpected buzzas, arising from this bold tirade on his majesty and ministers, he must have had too much wit and good taste to have been the author. To the persecution of his ministerial opponents, therefore, and to no intrinsic merit in the publication, Wilkes must consider himself indebted for the increase of his popularity. Observe the absurd vanity in the introduction to this famous 45.

"John, Earl of Bute, made first commissioner of the Treasury, May the twenty-ninth, seventeen hundred and sixty-two."

"On the same day, the first number of the *North Briton* was published.

My grandfather had gone to bed, and my aunt was on the point of following, when this uncommon scene occurred. In return for her most sapient arguments and remonstrances, my father called her simpleton, and told her she was the only female in the kingdom who would not glory in the honour of receiving such an illustrious brace of patriots.

My grandfather on rising in the morning, found that the mob had not only made bonfires of his timber during the whole night, but that my father had staved his ale barrels, and killed an ox and two sheep, preparatory to a grand public dinner to be given that day, on one of his best meadows, in honourable celebration of their arrival. The old gentleman was about to work himself into a furious passion, when Wilkes was introduced, and in a few hours, with his usual fascination, so completely won the favour of his host and hostess, that they immediately ranked themselves at the head of his admirers.

But, alack, soon after his departure, my grandfather awoke from his dream, and returning to his usual calm, regular, and loyal life, wondered, to use his own expressions, "that he had made himself such an absurd, old, democratic fool."

On their departure, Wilkes told my father that he was extremely sorry they had put the old gentleman to so much expense—yet he would venture to say that the obligation was in some degree mutual, since he had had the gratification of rousing the owner of a country house, by bonfires, huzzaing, and public dinners, from the miserable monotony of seeing only hills, and trees in the same places: hearing the same noises from birds and beasts, and mixing in the company of those, who are more interested by the death of a calf, or the capture of a poacher, than by the decease of a great statesman, or the conquest of a whole nation.

Whilst we lived in the Adelphi, Garrick was our opposite neighbour, and my father's intimate acquaintance. We frequently used to meet him in John Street, and join the little circle, collected by his most amusing conversational talents.

One wet day, I remember Garrick overtaking my father and me, in the most miry part of the city. After the usual salutations, he pointed to our white stockings, (he himself be-

"John, Earl of Bute, resigned April the eighth, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three."

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ing booted), and asked us, if we had ever heard the story of the Lord Chancellor Northington? On our reply in the negative, he told us, that one rainy afternoon, his Lordship, plainly dressed, walking in Parliament Street, picked up a handsome ring, which, according to custom, (in past, and, I believe, in present times) was immediately claimed by a gentleman ring-dropper, who, on receiving his lost treasure, appeared so joyful and grateful, that he insisted on the unknown finder accompanying him to an adjoining coffee house, to crack a bottle at his (the ring gentleman's) expense.

Being in the humour for a joke, Lord Northington acceded, and followed him to the coffee-house; where they were shown into a private room, and over the bottle for a time discussed indifferent topics. At length, they were joined by certain confederates; and then, hazard being proposed, the Chancellor heard one whisper to another, “ Damn the loaded dice—he is not worth the trouble—*pick the old flat's pocket at once!*”

On this the Lord Chancellor discovered himself, and told them, if they would frankly confess why they were induced to suppose him so enormous a flat, he would probably forget their present misdemeanor. Instantly with all due respect they replied, “ We beg your Lordship's pardon, but whenever we see a gentleman in *white stockings* on a *dirty* day, we consider him a capital pigeon, and pluck his feathers as we hoped to have plucked your Lordship's.”

“ Now,” added Garrick, “ leaving you gentlemen to deduce the application, I do myself the honour of wishing you a very good morning.”*

But to return to Westminster; the holidays having expired I was sent again to school. Every week my situation there became more pleasant. Amongst the schoolfellows with whom I used to pass the greater portion of my time, was the late Duke of Bedford. We were in the same class, and nearly of the same age and disposition, consequently we were almost inseparable.

On the half holidays, we used to stroll together to his estates, either in Covent Garden, or Bloomsbury Square, and then with boyish exultation, he would exclaim, “ all this is mine!” Then, we would enter Stacie's Hotel, in the former place, and

* Quare—Is the word *blacklegs* derived from *white stockings*?

calling, in a swaggering tone of half real, and half mock authority, for the master, who (well knowing his young landlord,) would immediately set before us, soups, venison, and all “the fat of the land.”

Sometimes, we used to direct our course towards Battersea Fields, to shoot larks and field-fares; or rather for *him* to shoot them: for though I regularly fired, until I was as black in the face as a chimney sweeper, I never even winged a tom-tit. This lack of talent in the sportsman, he used jestingly to attribute to defects in the gun, and promised to give me a perfect one.

Though every day our intimacy increased, I never mentioned his name at home, for two reasons: first, because the pride of a Westminster boy acknowledges no inequality of rank; and secondly, because I thought it would set some part of my family “castle building.” It was on a Sunday, I well remember, the family first discovered my secret. All were sitting in a listless, *toothpick state*, waiting the announcement of dinner, when a thundering knock at the door, briskly dispersed their vacant reveries. Surprised by a visit at so unusual an hour, several ran to the window; whence, seeing a splendid equipage, and a ducal coronet, my father, thinking that a visiter of such high rank could only come to our house on business to himself, prepared to descend with much importance; when, to his utter astonishment, the footman entered the room, saying that the Duke of Bedford was below, and wished to speak to—*me*.

In the parlour, I found my friendly school-fellow, waiting to fulfil his promise, by the gift of the very handsome gun he placed in my hands. After staying a short time to view a few of my boyish possessions, he departed; and from the windows, the family saw us nod, and shake hands on parting, as if we were on most familiar and brotherly terms.

During dinner, my father was extremely grand and consequential, obliquely reproaching me with a mysterious, selfish conduct. At length, he openly asked me, whether I intended to keep all the “loaves and fishes” to myself? This, I expected, but I answered, “I don’t know what you mean, Sir?”

“Mean!” repeated my father; “mean?—why I mean there is nothing like school connection, and if you are not a fool, Fred, the fortune of the House of Reynolds will be made by

that of Tavistock.—Dick,” continued my speculative father, “with management, might be made member for Bedford; Bob, a Dean; and you, a Welch Judge.”

“A Welch Judge!” cried my mother and my aunt, simultaneously, “if his friend, the Duke, can do no more than that for him, with our consent, he shall never enter these doors again!” Some time afterwards, boylike, making this communication to the Duke, he said, “I was born a whig, and shall remain one, were it only to avoid the loss of a friend, by obliging him.”*

Owing to the sudden indisposition of the Duke, I did not again see him for some time. He was long confined to his chamber, at his grandmother’s the Duchess of Bedford, by a dangerous illness. When his Grace recovered, his brother, Lord William Russell, (then a boy seven or eight years old) is said to have expressed himself to Lord John, (the present Duke, (in the following *naïf* manner:—

“Why Jack, here would have been a change had my brother died!—you would have been Duke of Bedford, and I, Lord John!”

In the month of November, a new boy came to Jones’ Boarding House; a little Cambro-Briton of a most singular character. He either had, or affected to have, an extraordinary susceptibility of nerves, that would sometimes make him vapourishly lachrymose and desponding; or, as it more frequently occurred, formidably irritable and vehement. Consequently, this half mad Taffy was not the person patiently to endure the new comer’s usual ordeal. He slept in my room, and used frequently to declare, that if his petty tyrants did not cease to torment him, he would hang himself. This threat constantly repeated, without execution, naturally, only led to increased ridicule, and manual annoyance. At last, to my horror and surprise, he literally kept his word.

One evening, suddenly entering our chamber, I discovered him hanging from the bed post, black in the face, and in a state of suspended animation. I called for assistance, and several boys immediately arriving, one of them instantly cut the rope

* Louis XIV. used to say, that when he gave away a place, he made one ungrateful man, and ninety-nine enemies.

with his pocket knife; and laying him on the bed, the proper restoratives were successfully applied.

On the recovery of his senses, in a faint and tremulous tone, he expressed a desire to see the preserver of his life. One of the bystanders, in the general confusion, pointed to me, and then several of the boys exclaimed, " Reynolds, Reynolds." I was preparing to explain to him, that I was not so fortunate as to deserve his gratitude, when, with great agitation, he beckoned me to advance. I obeyed, and then slowly and gently raising himself, as if to embrace me, he gave me a cuff on the ear, with so much heartiness and vigour, that after describing a few ungeometrical circles, I measured my length on the floor.

" There, take that," he cried, with much apathy, " and the next time I choose to hang myself, you will know better than to prevent me."

However, for the present, enough of school; and as my book, like my life, must occasionally be chequered by motley incidents, I will now recur to the stage.

Calling one morning on my mother's friend, Mrs. Nuttall,* in Palace-yard, I met for the first time, the late Mr. Harris; who, for nearly half a century, so ably and liberally managed Covent Garden Theatre. He was speaking of Garrick; and on asking Mrs. Nuttall if she had lately seen him, she replied, " Last night, I went with this young gentleman, and saw him play Benedick." She then introduced me to Mr. Harris, who taking me by the hand, and kindly shaking it, said, " Well, my young Westminster, and pray in which scene might you like Garrick best?"

" In the scene, Sir," I replied, " where he challenges Claudio "

" And why, Frederick?" inquired Mrs. Nuttall.

" Because, Madam, he there made me laugh more heartily than I ever did before; particularly on his exit, when sticking on his hat, and tossing up his head, he seemed to say as he strutted away, Now, Beatrice, have I not cut a figure?"

" You are right, my boy," rejoined Mr. Harris; " whilst other actors by playing this scene seriously, produce little or no effect, Garrick, by acting, as if Beatrice were watching

* Widow of the then late Solicitor of the Treasury.

him, delights, instead of fatiguing the audience. Such is his magic power," Mr. Harris continued, " that a few nights ago, whilst waiting for him at the stage door, till he had concluded the closet scene in Hamlet, I was so awe-struck by the splendour of his talent, that, though from long intimacy, Garrick and I always address each other by our christian names, on this occasion, when he quitted the stage, and advanced to shake hands with me, I found myself involuntarily receding —calling him, *Sir!*—and bowing with reverence. He stared, and expressing a doubt of my sanity, I explained; on which, he acknowledged with a smile of gratification, " that next to Partridge's description of him in Tom Jones, this was the most genuine compliment he had ever received."*

Shortly afterwards, I saw Garrick perform Hamlet for the last time. On the morning of that day, Perkins, who was my father's wig-maker, as well as Garrick's, cut and trimmed my hair for the occasion. During the operation, he told me, that when I saw Garrick first behold the ghost, I should see each individual hair of his head stand upright; and he concluded, by hoping, that though I so much admired the actor, I would reserve a mite of approbation for him, as the artist of this most ingenious mechanical wig; " the real cause," he added, " entre nous, of his prodigious effects in that scene."

Whether this story was related by the facetious perruquier, to puff himself, or to hoax me, I will not pretend to decide; but this, I can say with truth, that though I did not see Garrick's hair rise perpendicularly, *mine* did, when he broke from Horatio and Marcellus, with anger flashing from " his two balls of fire," (as his eyes were rightly called) exclaiming,

" By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."

The effect he produced in a previous scene, when he uttered the following line, was electric:—

" I will watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again."

* As a contrast to this panegyric, and to show that the greatest literary doctors can disagree as positively as the medical, I will repeat the remark, that even Boswell classes amongst Dr. Johnson's absurd, and heterodox opinions. On Boswell asking him, " Whould not you, Sir, start as Mr. Garrick does, if you saw a ghost?" Johnson replied, " I hope not, if I did, I should frighten the ghost."

I have since heard many actors of Hamlet give these words, in a calm, considerate, and consequently, ineffective manner; but Garrick, buoyant with hope and paternal love, rushed exultingly forward, and spoke the words with an ardour and animation, that electrified the whole audience.

“ Hence to thy praises, Garrick, I agree,
And pleas’d with nature, must be pleas’d with thee.”

On the night Garrick left the stage, my brother Jack, and I, after waiting two hours, succeeded at length in entering the pit. But, the commencement of the evening was somewhat unfortunate to my brother, who during the struggle in the pit passage, not only had his watch stolen, but so completely lost his temper, that, on the detection of the thief, who immediately offered to restore the property, Jack, instead of receiving it, with all the fury of an enraged young lawyer, determined to have the stolen goods found on him. Accordingly, he seized him, and shouted for police officers—in vain; the crowd involuntarily prevented a possibility of their interference.

In this dilemma, Jack’s rage not abating, he continued to drag forward the culprit, till they arrived at the paying place. Here came the “tug of war;” for the rush and pressure allowing no delay, the money-taker vociferously demanded the cash, when the *sharp* having none, the *flat* had no alternative, but to pay for him. Made more desperate by this additional loss, Jack now dragged the thief into the pit, and again called loudly for police officers, who at length came, though somewhat late; for, owing to the increased confusion, the bird had at length broken from Jack, and flown!—not only with the watch, but as, at that time, money was returned on crowded nights, probably, with the three shillings into the bargain. Thus, Jack not content with having his pocket picked, picked his own pocket.

The riot and struggle for places can scarcely be imagined, even from the above anecdote. Though a side box close to where we sat, was completely filled, we beheld the door burst open, and an Irish gentleman attempt to make entry, *vi et armis*—“Shut the door, box-keeper!” loudly cried some of the party—“There’s room by the pow’rs!” cried the Irishman, and persisted in advancing. On this, a gentleman in the second row, rose, and exclaimed, “Turn out that blackguard!”

“ Oh, and is that *your mode, honey?*” coolly retorted the Irishman; “ come, come out, my dear, and give me satisfaction, or I’ll pull your nose, faith, you coward, and *shillaly* you through the lobby!”

This public insult left the tenant in possession, no alternative; so he rushed out to accept the challenge; when, to the pit’s general amusement, the Irishman jumped into his place, and having deliberately seated and adjusted himself, he turned round, and cried,

“ *I'll talk to you after the play is over.*”

The Comedy of the Wonder commenced, but I have scarcely any recollection of what passed during its representation; or, if I had, would it not be tedious to repeat a ten times told tale? I only remember, that Garrick and his hearers, were mutually affected by the farewell address; particularly in that part, where he said, “ The jingle of rhyme, and the language of fiction, would but ill suit his present feelings,” and also, when putting his hand to his breast, he exclaimed, “ Whatever may be the changes of my future life, the deepest impression of your gratitude will remain here, fixed, and unalterable.”

Still, however, though my memory will not allow me to dwell further on the events of the evening, my pride will never permit me to forget that I witnessed

GARRICK’s Dramatic Death.

CHAPTER III.

HOLIDAYS, AND GROWING IDEAS.

"Burke, Sir, is such a man that if you met him for the first time, in a street, where you were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped aside to take shelter, but for five minutes, he would talk to you in such a manner, that, when you parted, you would say, this is an extraordinary man. Now, Sir, you may be long enough with me, without finding any thing extraordinary."

BOSWELL'S TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES.

PREVIOUSLY to the long vacation in August, my father and Lord Grandison had gone to Ireland; and shortly afterwards, my aunt received an invitation from his Lordship, requesting her and me to join him at his seat, near Lismore.

The anticipation of this real party of pleasure, almost overwhelmed me. I could scarcely eat, drink, or sleep, from excess of ecstasy. Two entire active days having been devoted to those three grand preparatory delights, packing up, making purchases, and consulting road books, (probably after all the traveller's best amusements,) we started for Waterford.

As I shall have occasion hereafter to speak of South-Wales, I will now merely state, (to avoid a twice told tale,) that we arrived, after a stormy night, at Milford Haven, on a fine August afternoon. The packet then being on the point of sailing, we embarked, and as we glided over the smooth surface of that most capacious and beautiful harbour, I anticipated nothing but gratification from this my first voyage.

However, as might be expected, it soon ended in the *old story*, for I had not been *sea-sawed* for half an hour before I was overcome with sickness, and reeling towards the cabin, I was nearly falling overboard, when one of the *enemy's* tremendous heaves cast me headlong down the cabin stairs, leaving me on the floor, there to ruminate on the delights of a party of pleasure. Soon, however, the steward pushed me into a

lower bed, over which lay another invalid, who, from some real or fancied cause, was so incessantly issuing from, or returning to, his hole of suffocation, that, in addition to my being reduced to the state of a "*mewling child*," I ran the risk every moment of being an *overlaid* one. In short, the heat, the stench, the motion, the noise, and the sickness, tempted me, even at that early age, to address old father Neptune, as Lord Foppington does Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, "You are a horrid brute, stab my vitals."

Yet, John Bull is of such an amphibious nature, that on the four or five first fine summer days, the whole town cries, "Tally-ho! hark forward to the sea side!" Now, my Lord John, and common John, in the name of common sense, allow me to ask you for what purpose you pursue this wild-goose chase? Is it to see this god of your idolatry on a hot day, calm, (id est, sulky) and so surrounded by burning sands, heated shingles, and reflecting white cliffs, that you are compelled in your own defence to stay at home to avoid him? Or, is it to see him on a tempestuous day, when you can not row, or sail, or approach him without being pickled by the spray; and when the few fish that are caught, leave your longing regards, and take their road to the metropolis? Or, is it to see him at low water, and inhale the exhalations from the mud, and thus benefit the system by an attack of asthma or intermittent fever?

As for pleasures, independent of the *idol*, I should be glad to know in what they consist. Surely, not in the querulous complaints of invalids in the morning on the difficulties of getting through the remainder of the day? Nor in the ennui of libraries, billiard-rooms, the *same places*, and the *same faces* that drive you to the contemplation of the church clock, till dinner-time? In fact, to close this wretched account, do they consist, as Dr. Johnson says, "in experiencing that sort of intellectual retrogradation, that the more you hear, the less you learn?"

After these *unanswerable* interrogatories, it must be a source of sincere gratification to every philanthropic mind, to learn, that the majority of sea-side traders are rapidly adopting the conscientious principles of action, of a late hotel keeper at Margate, who fairly acknowledged, that, when Londoners came within his grasp, he usually managed to charge them for talk-

ing, walking, and breathing. "Because," he added, "as these *Sea Gulls* only bring a certain sum to expend in folly and idleness, the more quickly I can effect their purpose, the sooner I shall return them to their senses and their professions."

Our voyage ended the following evening, when we landed at Waterford, where we were much struck by the beauty of the Quay, the Custom House, and the Cathedral; but my attention was soon withdrawn by "metal more attractive," a lamp post with a play-bill on it, stating in large letters that "*HAMLET*" was that evening to be performed, for the benefit of a Mr. Randall, a supposed *London star*.

We took a hurried dinner, and after it, went to the Theatre, which was so nearly empty, (though for a favourite's benefit) that the hero of the night, on his entrance, suddenly receded, with a start of horror; then, again advanced, and bursting with rage, exclaimed,

"Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, ought ye not to be ashamed of yourselves? and is this the way you support sterling talent?"

"By the pow'rs," replied a spectator near the orchestra; "I only know the *whole pit here*—that is myself, my son Lary, and Donaghadoo my mother's son,—paid to support you—and is this your gratitude, Jewel?"

"Feeh, and that's just our way of thinking," cried a voice from the gallery; "so, go it, my *pippins!*—Three cheers for the *present* company, and three groans for the *absent!*"

These opinions opened Randall's eyes, and he apologized, and thanked his few, but real, benefactors.

The play then proceeded, and for some time, with only a few interruptions; when suddenly, a new and most unexpected *actor* made his appearance;—no less a personage than our old *enemy*, father Neptune; who, owing to an uncommonly high spring tide, followed us up even into a theatre.

At first, however, he only invaded the passages, and lower parts beneath the stage; but soon filling them, and bending his irresistible course through the orchestra to the pit, it appeared probable, that more personages than Ophelia would have "*too much of water*."—At length, the manager stepped forward, and informing us, that rather than see an *oxymoron*

put to our *lives*, he begged we would *return* our money, and “*humbly gave us leave to depart.*”

This address was received with thunders of applause, and the gallery people seeing the water fill the theatre more and more, shouted out as they departed, “Good luck to you, Randall, for you’ve at last got ‘a *bumper.*’”

On the next morning, we proceeded for Lismore; where, we passed a very pleasant day, with a family, whom Lord Grandison had prepared to receive us. On the following afternoon, we arrived at his Lordship’s mansion, situated near Castle Lyon, on the river Bride, which is navigable as far as Youghall. The building, park, and gardens, were magnificent and extensive, and worthy in every respect, to be the residence of the noble owner.

The family consisted of the Dowager Lady Grandison, who was only remarkable by the numerous pack of poodles she maintained, and by her formidable hospitality:—Lord Grandison, a gentleman devoted to fashion, and fashionable hours, but truly well bred and well informed: Lady Grandison, sister to the late Marquis of Hertford, a most amiable, lovely, and accomplished woman:—an old Irish Major—a sporting parson—the house apothecary—my father, my aunt, and myself.

Never having good health, the very first day I experienced all the *comforts* of visiting—Being always accustomed at school to dine at one o’clock, I here totally lost all appetite, by waiting for my dinner till six; still, however, they forced me to eat, and instead of two glasses of Port, which agreed with the constitution, I was obliged to drink six, of Claret, which again gave me the old cabin feeling. After swallowing between a pint and a quart of those potent foes to sleep, tea, and coffee, tumid with repletion, and exhausted by the heat of the evening, I was permitted to retire to my bed-room; where, instead of a refreshing coolness, I discovered (kindly placed there to guard against damp) a roaring fire: and, to add, if possible, to the *warmth* of my reception, in lieu of my accustomed hard, and rugged mattress, I found myself *embraced* by all the yielding tenderness of a bed of down, and *pressed* by a brace of weighty blankets with such an ardent affection, that if I had not thrown them off, (though not exactly a man “*of thaw and dissolution*”) I should have arisen, *jockey like*, *starved to feather weight*.

Mais cela ne valait rien; nothing would relieve me from the heat; and I never closed my eyes till about half an hour before dawn, when I was awakened by the sporting parson, who, insisting that I should join him, and the Major, in a delightful fishing party, actually carried me half asleep into a boat on the Bride. In fact, no fly in a cobweb, was ever more *flustered*, than I, by this most attentive, and really hospitable family.

Next day, we all sailed in Lord Grandison's yacht to Youghall; where, we were invited to a salmon roast, by an Irish Baronet, whose name I can not now recollect. On our passage, his Lordship teased the Irish Major, by quoting from a book, then, not long published; "*Twiss's Tour in Ireland.*"

"I say," cried the Major, "that that book is a most false, scandalous, gross——"

"Come, come," interrupted the Parson; "at any rate you must acknowledge the truth of two of his anecdotes; for, they are certainly creditable to the Irish taste, in the *beaux arts.*"

"What are they?" inquired the Major, somewhat less gruffly.

"Why," rejoined the Parson, "the first, is that he saw in the Mayoralty House, at Cork, a common house painter, colouring Lord Chatham's splendid, white marble statue, for the purpose of beautifying it; and the second, informs us, that the eight magnificent, black marble columns, which support the roof of Kilkenny Church, have been whitewashed, from the same elegant motive."

"By the pow'rs!" cried the impassioned Major, "I repeat that that book is false, and scandalous, and that any man——".

"Nay," interrupted Lord Grandison, "you can not deny the truth of the statement; so, you may as well laugh at it, as at the rest of the book; in which, I am sure, there is neither sufficient misrepresentation, nor sufficient scurrility, to merit the degradation it has produced to its author;" alluding to the bottoms of certain indispensable recipients, on which was ludicrously pourtrayed the head of this most facetious gentleman, with an appropriate inscription, commencing, "*O rare Dick Twiss;*" a "*mauvaise plaisanterie,*" too well known to need continuation here.

On landing, the Baronet conducted us over his grounds, and pointed out to Lord Grandison the improvements made

since his Lordship's last visit; what these *improvements* were, I could not distinguish; certainly, there was a fine new bay-window, executed in a handsome style of architecture, and commanding a view of a verdant lawn, and a branch of the river; but, on the opposite bank, were a number of black, unsightly gunpowder mills; one of which had lately exploded, and unroofed a large portion of the Baronet's mansion.

I asked the person next me, (the Parson) what could induce the Baronet, to allow the presence of such ugly, and at the same time, dangerous neighbours? He replied, that there was a civil war in this part of the country, waged by a race of *rural* Yorks and Lancasters; and our host having lost the land, on which the mills stood, owing to a flaw in his title, a *White Rose* had bought it of the new possessor, solely for the purpose of annoying the *Red Rose* Baronet.

We next ascended a new terrace, opposite a dark thick wood, through which, the Baronet had cut a wide avenue, forming a beautiful vista to the river, and surrounding country. At first, no doubt this view must have been very fine, but when I saw it, the termination was anything but attractive; for, owing, (as the story was told) to a leading alderman's wife, who was a violent *White Rose*, not having been invited to one of the Baronet's grand parties, she and her husband contrived to have a condemned White Boy executed on the spot, where he had perpetrated his crime. This spot, happening to be on the shore, in the very centre of the Baronet's avenue, there, the culprit continued to hang, within a couple of hundred yards from the mansion, swinging and rattling at the impulse of every breeze, a most conspicuous and agreeable termination to this *picturesque* prospect.

On a remonstrance from the Baronet, the alderman replied—

“ And instead of a formal, level wood, arrah, have I not now favoured you with a *lively hanging wood*? ”

In the evening we returned, and on the following morning, as early as four o'clock, I was awakened by the undrawing of my curtains; and to my astonishment, at my bed-side, I discovered my father.

He bade me not be alarmed, and told me on my aunt's rising, to prepare her for his and Lord Grandison's sudden disappearance. He said, that they had not a moment to lose: for, having been forced, on the previous day, to compel several

of his Lordship's tenants to pay a part of their arrears of rent, he had that moment been privately informed, that two or three hundred White Boys intended to attack, and plunder the house, that very night. As however, he and Lord Grandison were the sole objects of their vengeance, he had no idea that a few hours delay would be productive of any injury to us; but, his informant had assured him, that *their* persons were in immediate danger.

At this moment, Malangue, (Lord Grandison's valet,) entered, and told my father, that his Lordship was waiting for him in the carriage; and added that La Fleur, her Ladyship's servant, had been ordered to inform his mistress, horses should be immediately sent from Lismore, for her and the rest of the family. My father, embracing me in great agitation, left the room; and then he, Lord Grandison, and his valet, immediately departed.

I need not describe *my* agitation; and sleep being out of the question, I rose with the sun, and entered the parlour; where, I was glad to find the major. He was in his nightcap and shirt; unwashed, and unshaved; supporting his breeches with one hand, and with the other flourishing a huge cutlass.

"Arrah, my joy, and this is life now," he cried: "I have not had a regular skirmish since the Culloden business."

Then, snatching up a pair of pistols he had just loaded, and rushing into the court-yard, to ascertain their condition, he fired the one, and immediately afterwards the other.

These reports, joined to the White Boy *report*, so completely alarmed the whole house, that screaming was heard from every part of it, and La Fleur rushed into the room, exclaiming, in an agony of fear and passion, "Morbleu! me voici, moi, Miladi's gentlemen in de middle of de danger, et voila ce coquin de Malangue, Milord's man, he is safe!"

Before we had time to reply to this disinterested speech, we heard so tremendous a clamour, that, at first, even the Major was staggered. But, soon recovering himself, he rushed in the direction of the sound, followed by me, hesitating between shame and fear, till we entered the Dowager Lady Grandison's apartment, when we discovered enough to dispel every feeling, but that of the ludicrous.

Alarmed, by the report of the two pistols, the poor parson, having heard of the expected visit of the White Boys, instant-

ly concluded the whole house was already in their possession. Rushing he knew not whither for concealment, he entered her ladyship's chamber; who, awakened by the fracas of this unexpected intrusion, thought the trembling parson in his shirt, a threatening White Boy in his frock, and implored him, as Scrub implores Archer, "to *spare* all she had, and take her life!"

The parson having apologized and retired, her Ladyship was soon quite composed, and reassured, but to silence a pack of poodles was a more difficult task; it was effected, however, in time to hear the news of the arrival of the horses from Lismore. Then, having dressed and prepared themselves, the whole garrison sounded a retreat, except the Major, who insisted on remaining; and who, having collected, as we afterwards learned, a small military force, and fortified the house, dispersed the rebels, almost as soon as they appeared.

At Lismore, we all dined together, and then parted; Lord Grandison and his family, for Dublin; and my father, my aunt, and myself, for Waterford, where we embarked. On the passage to Milford Haven, our *enemy*, as usual, took the lead; nor did my sufferings cease, till I again set my foot on terra firma, and proceeded to the inn; where, after a comfortable dinner, and a night of *independence*, though I did not forget all the kindness, attention, and hospitality of our late noble host, and hostess, yet when I rose the following morning, boy as I was, I *unconsciously* acknowledged the truth of the following old lines:—

" Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
Where'er his varied tour has been,
Must grieve to think he's always found
His *surest* welcome at an inn."

The holidays having ended, I returned to Westminster, and was placed in the fifth form, where I found myself completely in *high* life, for, in that form, the Shell,* and the sixth, were the late Duke of Bedford, and the late Earl of Mexborough; the present Dukes of Bedford and Dorset; the Marquisses of Stafford, and Anglesea; the Earl of Ashburnham; Lord Somers, Lord Dynevor, and Lord William Russel.

* Shell—the form between the fifth and the sixth.

Whether the *talent* of the school was in proportion to the rank, I can not say, but that the latter tended to give a fashion to the former, and to abolish whatever were considered vulgar and ignoble customs. I can decidedly declare—*Exempli gratia*—Two boys in the fifth (the eldest not twelve years of age,) of the names of Harry Dodds, and Jerry Collier, having quarrelled, agreed to fight on the green.

“No, no,” said the captain of the school, “it is time that we in the upper forms, should consider ourselves men of honour and rank, and discarding all plebeian habits, adopt the ‘duello,’ as the only gentlemanly mode of settling disputes.”

“Duello!—We fight a duel!” cried the two alarmed disputants;—“we wont!”

“We shall see,” replied the captain and the whole of the sixth, and the result was, that, after school, from dread of persecution and shame, Harry and Jerry, more dead than alive, stood opposite each other in the room with *hair triggered* pistols, which, they supposed, were loaded; but which, their sly arch seconds had only charged with powder. The chance of the first shot falling on Harry, he fired; and at the very moment of the flash, his second, unperceived by either of the principals, threw a bullet at Jerry, which hitting him on the forehead, he fell on the instant, and thinking himself in the agonies of death, vehemently cried, “O what a d—d shame.” Then, putting his hand to his head, as if to stop any further departure of his brains, he roared and rolled till his second, ~~conceiving~~ fearing fright might really produce serious effects, avowed the joke. In vain; Jerry still declared that he was dead, and nothing but the sight of the ball, and the non-appearance of blood, could ever have convinced him he was alive; but once convinced, he laughed, danced, sung, and hugged the *bullet thrower* as his preserver. Then, according to duelling etiquette, he fired his pistol in the air, and strutted out of the school crying,

“Exit a complete man of honour!”

As nine duels out of ten, are fought to satisfy the town, and not the parties themselves, why should not other seconds imitate the above-mentioned system, and keeping both the town and principals in ignorance, suffer the latter to escape with no more injury than agitation can inflict; and thus, instead of be-

ing accessories to murder, show they know how to maintain the laws of honour, without infringing the laws of humanity.

Of theatrical occurrences in this year, I can only recollect, that I saw Barry and Foote buried in the cloisters: and that on the first night of the "School for Scandal," returning from Lincoln's Inn about nine o'clock, and passing through the Pit passage, from Vinegar-yard to Brydges Street, I heard such a tremendous noise over my head, that, fearing the Theatre was proceeding to fall about it, I ran for my life; but found, the next morning, that the noise did not arise from the *falling* of the house, but from the *falling* of the screen, in the fourth act; so violent and so tumultuous were the applause and laughter.

Another theatrical, though puerile anecdote, I must add to this list. One half-holiday, the present George Colman, and I, went to see the two last acts of the "Old Bachelor," at Drury Lane, and entering a box up two pair of stairs, we discovered two little boys, at the corner of the last row, *nestling* together, trembling and sobbing. We asking them the cause, they timidly whispered "Hush!" and pointing on a solitary important personage in the front row, they informed us, that he had thumped and kicked them, whenever they laughed.

On hearing this, Colman (ever the little champion of the oppressed) descended into the front row, and tittered. The anti-comedy gentleman looking amazingly big at him, fiercely cried, "Silence,"—at the same time opening his snuff-box, and importantly taking snuff—Colman, with much politeness, asked him for a pinch, which, this foe to merriment, this *play-house* Herod, indignantly refused—"Won't you, Sir," cried Colman; "then shall I have the honour of giving you a *pinch*,"* and without waiting for a reply, *tweaked* our crabbed oppressor by the nose, and instantly vanished. So did not I; for, in attempting to follow him, I was pulled back, and on the point of being beaten to a mummy; when, Colman, who never deserted a friend in need, returning with two of his father's acquaintances, old *Killyoy*, finding us now too strong for him, walked off in dudgeon; and the assertor of *Thalia*'s rights, I, and the two little sufferers, seated ourselves in his place, to laugh freely and heartily at the *Old Bachelor*.*

* The elder Mr. Colman's management of the Haymarket commenced this season, and was most successful; for he introduced to public approbation, the three following justly celebrated performers: Miss Farren, now Count-

From the proximity of Westminster School to Westminster Hall, and the two houses of Parliament, I became a lawyer and politician in the egg-shell. I frequently attended the debates, and was, or rather imagined myself, a great admirer of Lord North, Fox, and Burke; and in Westminster Hall, of Lord Mansfield, Dunning, Thurlow, and Wedderburn. But, though young and inexperienced, and dazzled by the sagacity, vigour and eloquence of these gentlemen, I soon perceived that with great men a very little humour went a very great way; and often afterwards, when writing, I used to envy the one great advantage of Westminster Hall over theatres; however futile their attempts, barristers can not be hissed, and dramatists may.

On the Duke of Richmond's motion, April the 7th, 1778, relative to the independence of America, Lord Chatham rose from his bed, and, in the midst of pain and debility, attended the house. By the kindness of the Duke of Bedford, I stood close to the venerable statesman, as he passed through the Peer's lobby; and I afterwards heard his speech during the debate. Never, shall I forget the nervous and energetic tone, in which he delivered the following passage:

"I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still alive to lift my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient, and most noble monarchy. Pressed down, as I am, by infirmity, I am little able to assist my country in this most perilous conjuncture; but, I never will consent while I have sense and memory, to deprive the royal offspring of the House of Brunswick of their fairest inheritance."

The Duke of Richmond having replied to his speech, Lord Chatham attempted to rise to answer him; but, after two or three unsuccessful efforts, he fainted and fell. There was but one feeling through the house, both parties rushed to his assistance; though, on the sudden accidental interruption of an

ess of Derby, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Edwin. The two latter, I had seen the year before at Bath, in Gomez, and Dominic in the Spanish Friar; which they played with talent, that rendered all the Bath critics assured of their after success in London. In the following season, Mr. Colman senior, engaged Garrick's pupil, (Mr. John Bannister,) who made his first appearance in the character of Dick in the Apprentice. In consequence of his great success, he was engaged at Drury Lane, where he performed Zaphna for his début—of this successful actor, more hereafter.

ordinary orator's speech, the majority say, or seem to say, "for this relief, much thanks!"

Yet on this occasion, the only relief that could have gratified the most hostile, would have been the continuation of his reply, by the venerable object of their interest. But this hope was vain: he was carried out of the house, under the care of Dr. Brocklesby, followed by many admirers and friends, overwhelmed by grief and anxiety. Amongst that many, however, none so excited the general sympathy and sincere commiseration, as the man, in whom Lord Chatham afterwards lived again,—his son William Pitt. His sighs were "deep, not loud," till he entered the carriage with his apparently dying parent; when, taking him by the hand, he would have given "sorrow vent," had not Dr. Brocklesby, and all around, assured him, that there was no appearance of any immediate danger.

Lord Chatham only lingered for a few weeks, and breathed his last at Hayes, May the 11th, 1778. The same week, my father took me to see the bed, in which he died, and his coffin; afterwards, I saw him lie in state in the Jerusalem Chamber.* This, being the first time that I ever witnessed a ceremony of this description, the funereal appearance of the black hangings, and the appalling effect of all the other paraphernalia of death, aided by the melancholy paucity of lights, struck me with awe, and terror.

Old Wilbier, his Lordship's faithful steward, stood near the body; and while I was conversing with him, relative to this lamentable event, to his, mine, and the astonishment of the whole room, the lights suddenly disappeared, and we were all involved in total darkness. The screams and cries of "take care of the corpse!" still ring in my ears. Owing to the vastness of the confusion, a considerable time elapsed before lights could again be procured; at length when they were, the spectral, haggard countenances of all around, rendered even darkness less terrific.

The sole cause of this confusion was a hair-brained barrister, who, with a rapidity, never before manifested in his profession, had with the assistance of his hat, instantaneously extinguished the few tapers, without discovery; thus affording another

* Whence the body was removed to the Painted Chamber.

illustration of the old remark, that it is always in the power of a reckless individual, to violate the decorum of the most imposing and numerous assembly.

On the thirtieth of September in this year, we received a letter from my brother Richard, (who was on a visit to my grandfather at Trowbridge,) relating the following melancholy and afflicting circumstance. The previous day, my uncle rode to Bath, to inspect the erection of some buildings, under his direction; having promised his father to return to an early supper at nine o'clock. Soon after that hour, the family heard the trampling of the horse, and my aunt running to the old fashioned porch to meet her brother, to her horror and dismay, found the horse panting for breath, glaring wildly around, and without its rider.

The alarm was soon spread through the town; and so much was my uncle loved and respected, that several of the principal residents immediately went in search of him. In an hour, one of them returned with horror on his countenance, and told my grandfather, that his son was lying at a farm house two miles from Trowbridge, "without hope of recovery," added the considerate friend, to prepare them for the declaration of the fact, that the vital spark was wholly extinct.

It afterwards appeared, that the horse had run away with him on the Bath side of Melksham, and my uncle had struggled to stop him for above two miles; when disabled by exhaustion he fell, and his head encountering a large pointed stone, he was killed on the spot. That he was both a public, and a private, loss, every body who knew him, acknowledged —had he lived a few years more, his professional celebrity must have ensured him affluence; he had, however, realized enough to bequeath his sister a handsome independence.

About this period, one of our constant visitors was the Honourable Thomas Erskine, who had lately relinquished the army and the navy, for a new profession, the law. Little did I then think, that this young student, who resided in small lodgings at Hampstead, and openly avowed that he lived on cow beef, because he could not afford to purchase any of a superior quality,—dressed shabbily, expressed the greatest gratitude to Mr. Harris for occasional free admissions, and used boastingly to exclaim to my father, "Thank fortune, out of my own family I don't know a lord,"—little did I then think, that I should

ever live to see this distressed personage in possession of a peerage, the seals, and the annual receipt of above fifteen thousand pounds. But, want of income, that great professional stimulant, urged him into action; and aided by strong natural talents, and increasing industry, his consequent success, and rise, were so rapid, that I remember Murphy the dramatic author always calling him, the "Balloon barrister."

One of his first clients was Admiral Keppel, who, being brought to a court martial by Sir Hugh Palliser, and acquitted, presented his successful young advocate, with a bank note of one thousand pounds. Mr. Erskine showed us this novel sight, and exclaimed, "*Voila, the nonsuit of cow beef, my good friends!*"

Soon after Lord George Gordon's trial, for whom, with Lord Kenyon, he was counsel, and where again there was a verdict of acquittal, he came with "all his honours thick upon him," and passed three or four days with us, at Southbarrow. Whether success had not increased his companionable qualities, or, from what cause I know not, but, though equally conciliating to my father and my mother, he, and the junior part of the family, got so completely to loggerheads, that, on the day of his departure, full of our supposed annoyances, Jack, Robert, and myself, waylaid him at the gate, pulled off our hats, waved them, and then huzzaed him. He turned round abruptly, stared, and haughtily demanded what we meant!

"We mean," cried Robert, "to pay the compliment due to your talents."

"Aye," continued Jack, "particularly to your *talent* of making yourself *disagreeable*."

Then, we all ran into the house, and peeping through a window, saw him returning; when, suddenly altering his mind, he put spurs to his horse and galloped away.

The next time we met in the Adelphi, Erskine shook us by the hand, laughed heartily at the circumstance, and said, "as he did not forget he was a *great* barrister, we were quite right in remembering we were the sons of a *great* attorney;" a character certainly, not exactly to be trifled with, by either old, or young, big wigs.

During this year, another barrister, frequently our visiter, was Mr. Garrow, (now Baron Garrow;) a most liberal and honourable young man; combining in himself so many talents

requisite to obtain the highest honours and eminence in his profession, that, at the period, he so satisfactorily filled the important office of attorney-general, his numerous admirers much regretted that ill health prevented his acceptance of a higher legal station than the one he at present holds. I am sorry that I can remember no anecdote of him, at the time to which I am now recurring; unless, the following, in which he was a party, be considered worthy of this *catching* appellation.

He, and my brother Jack, went together one evening to a grand masquerade at the Opera House. Garrow only wore a domino, but Jack attempted to personate Shylock, and, as the principal means of success, learnt the whole part by heart. In course, the character failed in representation, but the result was, he never afterwards quoted from any play but the Merchant of Venice. One or two instances of his adaptations of these quotations may not prove unentertaining.

On my grandmother's lecturing him, and amongst other reproofs, asking him why, every morning he rose so late, he replied:

“ I'll not answer that,
But say it is my humour—”

At a dinner party, on being asked from what part of a turkey he would choose to be helped, he emphatically replied:

“ Nearest his heart!”

And again, when at Trowbridge, numerous small debtors to my deceased aunt, (who had received money from her on notes, and bonds,) called on my brothers and me, as her legatees, with a request that he would allow them time for payment. To this, we were naturally inclined to accede, when, Jack abruptly rose, and vehemently cried, to the horror of the terrified supplicants,

“ Till thou cans't rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:—
——Gader, look to them!—”

So much difficulty had we to persuade the poor fellows, that he was not in earnest, that we were obliged to make him take

them by the hands, and recant his threats, which he did by speaking the lines “on the quality of mercy.”

Now I am on the subject of masquerades, I trust I may be allowed to relate the following anecdote of the Duchess of Bolton; who, during the same year, gave a splendid masked ball to all the rank and fashion in London. Three of my school fellows had tickets; but I, having no possible hope of procuring, what was the object of the unsuccessful application of so many of the highest rank, regretted to them my inability to be of their party. They, however, earnestly desiring my company, advised me, as a last resource, to write, and request the ticket of the Duchess herself. I attended to their suggestions, and immediately sent the following note:

“A Westminster boy will be much obliged to her Grace the Duchess of Bolton for a ticket to her Masquerade; and in return, promises to make himself very entertaining.”

To their, and my surprise, but to the joy of all, the ticket was sent, and then came the rub; what should be our characters? At length, after much wrangling, it was decided we should go as “*High, Low, Jack, and the Game.*” Then more wrangling, concerning the mode in which we should dress our parts. Finally, it was thus settled; Smith, a tall boy, in a bull’s head, with large horns, bearing a placard, on which was written “*Consols 93½,*” was to represent *HIGH*: Collier, a short boy, with a large bear’s head, with hanging ears, and a placard exhibiting “*Long Annuities 12½,*” was to personate *Low*; Wilkins, as *JACK*, to be dressed exactly like the *Knave of Clubs*; but I, as *GAME*, how was I to be equipped?

After much cogitation, we decided that *GAME* could only be personified by covering me with dead *hares*, *pheasants*, and *partridges*. Thus attired, we started, convinced we should cut a great figure; but, on entering the room, found that nobody took the joke but ourselves; and three *bucks*, dressed as sharp-shooters, continued during the whole evening, to take aim, and snap their guns at me, and my *Manor*.

The well known circumstance of the fracture of the floor of the ball-room, occurred this evening. The alarm, and the struggles to escape were tremendous; but, most fortunately, there was no serious accident. Much discontent was expressed; one said, before I give a ball, I always have my house surveyed; another complained of the scarcity of iced cream,

(though there was abundance,) and another of the heat of the room. In fact, through life, I have observed there is no superfluous civility brings more dissatisfaction to its donor than a party; those, that *are not* invited, become his enemies, while those that *are*, receive the intended compliment only as their due, and depart ridiculing the inadequacy of his efforts.

I must now recur to an event of a very different character. On Friday, June 2d, 1780, Lord George Gordon went forth to meet, in St. George's Fields, what he called his forty thousand protestants; government, however, thought so little, either of him or his puritanical followers, that no troops were ordered into readiness on the occasion. The consequence was, that, after hearing his lordship's wild harangue against the Popish Bill, the populace divided into different parties, and before half-past two in the afternoon, surrounded both Houses of Parliament.

Soon they usurped the most arbitrary and dictatorial power; and at the time, I and other Westminster boys, "eager for the fray," entering Palace-yard, we witnessed the most novel and extraordinary proceedings. I acknowledge, at first, we enjoyed the scene, voting it *fun*; but soon, in spite of all our boyish love of mischief, we found the *joke* was carried much *too far*.

The mob shortly received the addition of many thousands of disorderly persons, occupying every avenue to the Houses of Parliament, the whole of Westminster Bridge, and extending nearly to the northern end of Parliament-street. The greatest part of it, however, was composed of persons decently dressed, who appeared to be incited to extravagance, by a species of fanatical phrenzy. They talked of dying in the *good cause*, and manifested all the violence of the disposition imbibed under the banners of Presbyterianism. They had long lank heads of hair, meagre countenances, fiery eyes, and they uttered deep ejaculations; in short, displaying all the outward and visible signs of hypocrisy and starvation. When they were requested by the magistrates to disperse, they vowed they would rather perish in the streets than endure a Popish Government; and they immediately proceeded to attack the members most offensive to them.

The first whom I saw grossly insulted, was the venerable Lord Bathurst, whom they pulled from his carriage, struck,

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and pelted with mud: the next was Lord Stormont, whose chariot was broken to pieces, and whose life was only preserved by the courage of a friend: and then, the Bishop of Lincoln, who escaped by a miracle: for, on his carriage being stopped, a ruffian dragged him forth, and seized him by the throat, with an evident attempt to strangle him; but a fortunate rush emancipating him, he took refuge in a gentleman's house; whence he escaped by the roof, while forty of the mob were vindictively searching for him below.

At length, Captain Topham, (afterwards, my most intimate friend) being ordered to charge at the head of a detachment of cavalry, I had an opportunity of observing a very curious effect. The crowd were wedged into such firm and compact masses, that the cavalry were actually compelled to recede, and return in a full gallop, in order to give their career sufficient force to penetrate them. The consequence was, that, after the cavalry had passed through them, the mob lay, in the most indierous manner, one over another, like a pack of cards; and the only accident of which I heard, was the fracture of a leg.

The next morning a new species of mob presented itself. All the lank and puritanical faces had disappeared, and rogues and robbery were the order of the day. Respectable individuals were turned out of their houses, with an affected civility, that the mob might burn them without injury to the persons of their proprietors. The magistrates, who had attended the different detachments of Horse and Foot Guards, were now totally disregarded; and a scene of universal plunder and anarchy was exhibited in every part of London.

It was on the morning of the third day, that the Jail of Newgate was broken open. The mob had fired it in many places, before they were enabled to force their way through the massive bars and gates which guarded its entrance. The wild gestures of the mob without, and the shrieks of the prisoners within, expecting an instantaneous death from the flames; the thundering descent of huge pieces of building; the deafening clangor of red hot iron bars, striking in terrible concussion the pavement below; and the loud triumphant yells and shouts of the demoniac assailants, on each new success, formed an awful and terrific scene. At length, the work of ruin was accomplished, and while the gaolers and turnkeys were either

flying or begging for their lives, forth came the prisoners, blaspheming and jumping in their chains.

The convicts being taken to the different blacksmiths in the neighbourhood, I followed one of them who was to have been hanged on the following Monday. On some sudden alarm, the mob, hastily brought him to the door, with a fetter still on one leg; then quitting their hold on him, and receding, they cried, "A clear way, and a clear run!" "Swifter than arrow from a Tartar's bow," flew the rogue, and I never saw him again; though, certainly, I heard of him a few months afterwards in the Newgate Calendar.

As it would be supererogatory to enter into a detailed account of all that passed during the seven days of these memorable riots, I will merely describe a few of the scenes that I witnessed. The lawless brutality of the mob, was only to be equalled by their cowardice; and I do believe, during the commencement, many houses might have been saved by the musical exertions of a single drummer. I saw three or four hundred of these "No Popery" ruffians commencing the destruction of a large house in Lincoln's Inn Fields; when, the drawing room windows being suddenly opened, I beheld a lady and her servants boldly present pistols: whether they did or did not fire, I can not tell, for both I and the mob commenced an immediate flight, and as the novelists say, "*were out of sight in an instant.*"

On the next day, with two of my school fellows, I cleared New-street, Covent-garden, of a turbulent gang, by rushing past the corner in St. Martin's Lane, and shouting, "the Guards! the Guards!" Then hiding ourselves in St. Martin's Court, and awaiting the event, enjoyed the disorderly retreat of at least two hundred dastards.

At length, on Monday June the 5th, the Guards did really come; when it was reported that several great oppositionists were aiding and leading the mob in disguise; and, strange as it may now appear, many, and I among them, believed this wild rumour. I mention this, because, having seen a chimney-sweeper, who was in the act of cheering the rioters, shot dead on the top of a fruit stall in Fleet Market, I heard a report, (which was repeated in the papers of the following day), that this sooty sufferer was no less a personage than a nobleman in disguise, and that that nobleman was my father's most

intimate friend, Lord Effingham. I was so shocked by this account that I ran home with the greatest speed. I found my father alone in his office; where, having deliberately heard my extraordinary communication, he told me, with a strange expression of countenance, (which I conceived to be the effect of the intensity of his grief,) to go up stairs, and cautiously break the sad tale to my mother and to the family.

I entered the drawing-room, and, though a large party, waiting for dinner, was assembled there, I commenced, without prelude, my affecting narrative; when one of the guests advancing, as if in the ardour of attention, I caught a view of his countenance, and suddenly stood aghast—it was Lord Effingham! He advanced, and taking me by the hand, I trembled as if I had been guilty of perjury; but my father entering the room at that moment, somewhat abated my confusion, by withdrawing the attention of the company from me to the story, which he continued to their great amusement. When he had concluded, his Lordship patting me on the head, to encourage me, said,

“ If everybody were as anxious about my life as you are, I should be sorry, for their sakes, to be killed so often; for you might have heard, Fred, this is my *third* death during these riots. However, to cure you of your fright, and to prove to you I have yet some remnants of loyalty, here, my boy, take this *little portrait* of his Majesty,” at the same time giving me a guinea.

The mob, now entire masters of London, every hour proceeded to some new act of audacity and depredation. Having fired or injured most of the principal edifices of the metropolis, they proposed attacking Buckingham House. The party of horse, commanded by Topham, and a detachment of foot, were sent to defend it. Here, they would not have awaited the sanction of a magistrate to fire; but the dastardly mob, finding there was a determination to oppose them, retired, as tumultuously as they came; threatening to return speedily in greater force.

During a situation so unquestionably trying, and during an occasional attendance of upwards of eleven years, Topham, (as officer in the Horse Guards,) had certainly opportunities of observing the late King’s character and behaviour. From the windows of his palace, his Majesty could see part of the me-

tropolis in flames, and might consequently every moment expect the attack, and perhaps, plunder of his own residence; yet, I have the evidence of Topham, that he never witnessed any conduct more firm, more dignified, or more composed; his words always were, “ I am persuaded the King does not know what fear is!”

My father, (whose ideas of liberty consisted in thinking he should have the power of checking those in power, rather than that those beneath him should think of checking him,) began to be puzzled as to his opinion of the riots. At first he praised the magistracy for not interfering; but, the havoc spreading far and wide, and not exactly understanding mob *tyranny*, on Wednesday, June the 7th, he put one hundred and fifty guineas into his pocket, and took us all with him to Southbarrow; where, after dinner, he said, if the rabble continued to rule, he would, in a day or two, depart for France—“ A wise country,” he added, “ where the Government was not in the people!”

Jack agreed with him, and both he and my father continued vehemently to inveigh against a democracy, until the former unluckily hinted, that he thought the cause of the riots had commenced with the cry of “ Wilkes and Liberty!” My father felt the rebuke, and rising abruptly from his chair, cried angrily to Jack, “ Either you, or I, leave this room.”

“ I know my duty, Sir,” replied my eccentric brother, and walked out, humming “ God save the King.”

However, at midnight, when we walked on the lawn, and looking towards London, saw by the red appearance of the sky, that probably half the metropolis was in flames, (and recollecting also that, before our departure, all the prisoners had escaped from Newgate, Clerkenwell, and the New Prison, to add to the universal horror and confusion) we approached my father, and instead of bantering him on his political tergiversation, unanimously thanked him for his kindness and foresight.

On Friday, June the 9th, these disgraceful scenes terminated; and to prevent a renewal of them, government wisely formed a large encampment of the guards and militia, in St. James’ and Hyde Parks. My father finding himself and all of us safe, returned to London; where soon relapsing into his old politics, the moment he heard of the two camps, he pa-

triotically exclaimed, “What! do we live in Turkey! Are the free people of England to be *dragooned* out of their independence?”

Jack muttered something about a change of sentiment; but my father was ever afterwards so sore on this point, that, notwithstanding all his affection and good-humour, we, from that time, never dared even to hint at a reminiscence of these two loyal days of his life. However, be it understood, he was not the only patriot, who had not been uniform on the occasion. While ministers and their adherents only suffered; while they and their firesides were *alone* attacked, thousands sang to the mob, “*Britons strike home;*” but, when *Britons did strike home*, indiscriminately, all parties began to loathe “the scum that rises upwards when the nation boils,” and condemned, avoided, or opposed them.

I can not conclude this account of popular delinquency, without adding, what, perhaps, will be acceded to by many; viz. John Bull, individually, is often an excellent fellow; but, collectively, he was never right but once in his life, and that was, when he *d—d* a comedy of mine.

CHAPTER IV.

LOVE, LAW, AND PHYSIC.*

“ Jours charmans, quand je songe a vos heureux instans,
 Je pense remonter le fleuve de mes ans;
 Et mon cœur enchanté, sur sa rive fleurie,
 Respire encore l'air pur du matin de la vie.”

IN the following year, I was placed in the head form of Westminster School, and one day, playing at foot-ball in the Cloisters, with a rival school-fellow of the name of Hamblin, a quarrel arose between us. We fought on the spot, and during the contest, I received a blow which made me stagger, and then fall on the stones, with such force, that my left arm was dreadfully fractured.

The Abbey bell at the moment tolling two in the afternoon, (the signal for the return of school hours,) all the boys immediately fled, and left me wholly alone, in a state of approaching insensibility; when a midshipman, son of Cumberland, the author, accidentally passing the spot where I lay, kindly assisted me. He supported me to Mr. Poignand's, the surgeon in Parliament-street, where my arm was set; and then, my gallant young conductor completed his kindness, by accompanying me home.

I remained in a state of confinement till after the Christmas holidays; when my father thought another dose of Westminster supererogatory. Here therefore end my school, though certainly, not my boyish, days, as the following pages will show:—

“ Men are but children of a larger growth.”

* For this title I am indebted to my friend Kenney, the author of a most successful after-piece, thus named, and many, equally successful, first pieces.

My father, having intended me for the profession of a barrister, proposed to send me, (as he had sent my brother Richard) to Trinity College, Cambridge. But, fortunately for me, it suddenly occurred to him, that, though a knowledge of mathematics and an additional four or five years imbibition of Greek and Latin, might finish me as a classic, yet it might undo me as a lawyer. He therefore placed me in his own office; and entered me on the books of the Middle Temple, on the 12th of January, 1782.

Law naturally did not monopolize my attention so devotedly, as to leave me neither leisure nor vacancy for other pursuits. After poring over dull parchments, and copying unintelligible pleadings all day, I used to resign my evenings to my youthful *cacoethes scribendi*. Shortly afterwards, for the first time in my life, I began to turn my thoughts towards amatory poetry; but halted, in the commencement, for the *want of a mistress*. For some time I was quite at a loss where to find one; but after an arduous search, I selected for my Dulcinea, the eldest daughter of a banker in the city.

Her christian name was Helen, and for a few sonnets, I found it admirable:

“O fair Helen,
Heart is swelling,
And rebelling,” &c.

But, the banker’s second daughter, Harriet, being very pretty, I (thinking change of name and subject, might relieve the monotony of my muse) wrote to her thus:—

“Pretty little Harriet,
Surely you can tarry yet,
So pray do not marry yet,”

Then, soon afterwards, hands across to a third daughter, to whom I wrote verse about,

“Sophy!”—“Trophy”—“O Pie!”—

Thus I continued, till without any premeditated design, I found myself in love with the whole family. The fair trio, however, with great good humour, always received both me, and my poetical attentions; and laughed, and thought each of us, I believe, a *very good joke*. I can not say wherefore, but

in love matters, I fear, *joke* too frequently leads to *earnest*. Thus it nearly did with us; for, though, when in London, both the assault and defence were conducted formally and decently, as we were surrounded by our papas and mammas, yet, when any one of these *Helens*, *Harriets*, or *Sophys*, used to pass a week at Southbarrow, (which was frequently the case,) I began to feel all the perplexing effects of "love and opportunity."

Rambles through gardens and fields;—ascents and descents, over stiles, gentle zephyrs propitiously blowing; and interesting conversations, and discussions, seated on fragrant banks of violets, fanning instead of cooling the flame! *O improbe amor!* O tormenting urchin! Luckily, however, *opportunity*, with me, did not lead to *importunity*; for, though often about to succumb, I rallied again *instanter*; not from principle, nor from want of love, but from cowardice. *Terror* was my most potent and successful ally; and though, "à la distance," I was often bold enough to press ardently for *tête à tête* meetings, yet, when they were attained, their immediate interruption and termination became the sole object of my thoughts.

Having given this account of the style and manner in which I conducted "Love's enterprises," a *finished* specimen of my poetical talents will not be now inapposite; particularly, as I used not to consider them my least important allies. The following juvenile lines, which I sent to Sophy, on her refusing to grant me a lock of her hair, I hope, (*odd and absurd as they are*) will not prove wholly unamusing:—

TO SOPHIA.

January 5th, 1782.

On Ida 'neath the myrtle's shade,
The Queen of Cyprus, sleeping laid;
Cupid from England, home return'd;
The little god with passion burn'd—
He bluster'd, flutter'd, stamp'd the ground,
And kick'd a little dust around;
But, finding all his raging vain,
He bluster'd, flutter'd, stamp'd again—
At length fatigued, he dropp'd a tear,
And sobb'd, "Mamma, O prithee hear!"—
The lovely Queen arose, and press'd
The little darling to her breast;

Then soothing, kiss'd away each tear,
 And weeping, begg'd his tale to hear—
 “ My sister Sophy, whom you know,
 “ You love,” he cried, “ the most below,
 “ Refus'd to give a lock of hair
 “ To one so fond, so true, so rare,
 “ Zounds, it would make Diana swear!”
 “ Mamma, he is a prettier boy
 “ Than little Ganymede of Troy,
 “ And none but her could him refuse,
 “ A thing that's of so little use”—
 “ My lovely child,” replied the Queen,
 “ I recollect the boy you mean;
 “ And wonder much that he should dare
 “ To ask of her a lock of hair,
 “ When, on his bosom late was seen
 “ A lock that had her sister's been—
 “ Besides, he's rude—does gaze and stare,
 “ Unblushingly on blushing fair.”
 The Cyprian Queen thus frowning cried,
 To which the God of Love replied,—
 “ Mamma, I wonder how you can
 “ Traduce so much my favourite man.
 “ Sure he may stare, for oft I know,
 “ You've looked Adonis, through and through;
 “ 'Tis very hard, because he wore
 “ The hair of others oft before,
 “ (Hair that was giv'n, he can't tell how,
 “ And why he wore it does not know,
 “ Unless because 'twas something new;)
 “ 'Tis very hard, I swear by Jove,
 “ He may not now at once remove
 “ Those wanton locks, for locks of love!—
 “ 'Tis childish, sure Mamma, it is,
 “ To use an argument like this;
 “ So tell her, if she will but spare
 “ One lock, one little lock of hair,
 “ He'll think himself should she but smile,
 “ The happiest man in Britain's isle.”—
 “ I'll go to England,” Venus said,
 “ And ask the lovely, conqu'ring maid.”

Notwithstanding this long intercession of Cupid, and Venus's longer journey, the “conquering maid” made a resistance longer than either. But, being one of those mild, pacific females, who are constantly saying, “Any thing for peace,” the

impression I vainly attempted to effect by sighing and *sorcery*, was at last excited by time, teasing, and tormenting.

Hobbes says, "the smallest force constantly applied will effect wonders;" and, on these principles, I managed my small force in the art of love. With such perseverance did I pursue my attacks, that soon, happy to accept the terms of truce she had previously so often rejected, Sophia eagerly ratified the peace and mutual amnesty, with her own fair hand, and scissors: and then abandoned to me the much desired lock, with almost as much pleasure as I received it. I seized it—kissed it—expended my pecuniary all on a mounting of gold and jewels, and then daily cherished and embraced the divine locket, till an accident compelled me to send it to another jeweller for repair. It was then, I discovered, that the former old *twaddling* tradesman, having lost my "fair virgin's ravish'd hair," had substituted a lock of his wife's; or, (were I to credit the assertions of the female judges of that period) of his wife's *eaxon*.

Thus, the little arch-tormentor, the *ignis fatuus*—the false direction post, managed, even in my earliest youth, to make me feel his power. O, how I rejoice, whilst writing this life, that I have for ever settled my account with him, "*errors excepted*;" and that I can no more have dealings with one, who, on every occasion, I too well recollect, has always arranged that the balance should be in the *per contra* leaf of our ledger.

The greatest difficulty, however, I had to encounter in the career of love, was the absence of those two grand essentials to success—beauty, and money. To supply these deficiencies, I was compelled to resort to less potent alternatives, and having unsuccessfully essayed the worrying, I determined henceforth to adopt the independent system:

"Woman, born to be controll'd,
Stoops to the forward and the bold."

By pretending to be careless of the sentiments of the object of my adoration, I hoped to make her care for *me*. But, soon I found my sanguine expectations again disappointed; for my easy manners, she denominated impertinence, and my independence, brutality.

The next mode to which I had recourse for success, was the assumption of a sort of *April* love, half sunshine, and half tears; in which, my main object was to make my mistress both laugh and cry. The latter, however, was my principal aim, because it led to tender reconciliations; and here, if the number of tears be the standard by which the extent of success is to be measured, I will venture to say, never lover of my age, nor of any age, was more effectively gallant; for none ever had the *happiness* of making more women *miserable*.

So much for love at the age of seventeen; and I am sorry to say, matters did not proceed *equally* successful with me, in law.

My father, whose memory I must ever revere, for his strong paternal affection and fine temper, had, as the reader may have already perceived, several eccentricities which enriched, not diminished, the force of his character. Were I to omit these, and he could overlook, and read my page, I am sure he would cry, “Fred, you are a very *dull* and sorry biographer!” so strong was his love for peculiarity, and antipathy to common-place.

He was a most amusing man during his whole *life*; and if he be not tolerably so, in “My Life,” it will certainly be my own fault. Perhaps, of all his pleasures, or relaxations, as he called them, not one was so injurious to him in his profession, as his increasing partiality for Southbarrow. He would struggle against it, however, and, strong with the fleeting force of a new resolution, would often, in the evening, suddenly cry to me and Jack—

“Come, boys, we must be stirring with the lark to-morrow morning—term is begun—business is in arrears—and by all that is serious, we must make up for lost time.”

Accordingly, the next morning, before six o’clock, off we would hastily start, half-dressed, and to gain still more time, gallop the whole way to town. After sending our horses to the stables, and seeing them well rubbed, and fed, (which would occupy a good half-hour,) my father would call in the head clerk, who would stand before him with a melancholy countenance, talking of clients complaining of errors, others of losses, and others of broken appointments, till my father would interrupt him crying,

“Human nature can not transact business on an empty

stomach—tell the footman to bring the breakfast immediately!"

After undergoing the exertion of eating two or three muffins, reading the newspaper, and giving a few vague, professional hints to the clerk, he would say—

"Come, my boys, I believe there is *nothing else* to be done."

Then, away we used to gallop back, as fast and as wise as we came.

My mother and my aunt used to tell him Southbarrow monopolized too much of his attention: but he always replied, that what he lost as a lawyer, he should gain as a farmer; though, at the time, we all knew that he never reared a turnip which did not cost him as much as a pine-apple, nor dressed a leg of mutton, which did not prove to him far dearer than purchased venison.

Still, however, so convinced was he of his agricultural knowledge, and of considerable profits ultimately accruing from it, that, though the annual balance was always greatly against the *gentleman farmer*, he contended it was wholly owing to bad management during his absence. In this, he always persisted; and one day, as we rode to town, overtaking a gentleman of the neighbourhood, I positively overheard my father tell him, without the slightest idea of a joke, that, two or three years before, having been compelled to attend the Salisbury Assizes, on his return he discovered that (such was the negligence of his family!) a neighbouring farmer had nightly sent his cattle to devour his clover and turnips:—that the hay had self-ignited from being stacked when wet; that the granary had been robbed; and that his favourite horse Captain, deserted by every body, and gnawed by hunger, had walked to the pond in the court yard, and *deliberately drowned himself!*

My father's office, candidly speaking, was not altogether the place in which "the young idea could be taught how to shoot;" yet, in the hope of repaying his constant paternal kindness, by making myself useful to him in his profession, I continued to be fairly industrious. One evening when he was out of town, and Jack was ill, I attended, as their substitute, a consultation in Lincoln's Inn, accompanied by one of my father's clients, a banker: we waited some time alone, when four barristers, with ponderous briefs, entered the room, and im-

portantly took their seats. After a short pause, an interchange of looks, and a preluding hem! one of them significantly cried, "I don't understand this!" "Nor I, this," added another; "It wants explanation," pursued the third, looking importantly at me and the banker. While we stared, each at the other, in perfect confusion and ignorance, as to what course to adopt, the principal barrister arose, and after shaking his head, turned abruptly towards us, and cried,

"It is impossible we can proceed further, until your father, or some efficient person, comes and gives us the necessary information."

The four oracles then unceremoniously departed, leaving me and the banker behind, as I well remember; though, my memory at present is not sufficiently powerful, to assert with *certainty*, that they also left their fees. If they did, however, they were restored with interest, for the cause, after refresher on refresher, came on within the space of a few months; when, the counsel for the plaintiff having just opened the proceedings, the matter, by consent of parties, was referred to arbitration. At the end of two years, the arbitrators differed; and after more consultations, we all returned into court. Here, the banker at length gained his cause; but, so heavy were the costs, that, in this instance, (I trust a *solitary* one,) not only the oyster, but the shell was gone. Grown wiser, however, by experience, our client pocketed the affront; and with litigious controversy, no more "crazed his pate."

When it is remembered, that the profession of the law is sufficiently profitable for its practitioners to live by it, honourably and honestly, we must lament that so many wander from the regular road. Yet, that there are many "sound in heart as in head"—many who can fairly boast of being above all *crooked ways*, I am happy in this opportunity of acknowledging, and, in defiance of prejudice and the cry of "mad dog," can venture to add, that, if Diogenes were *now* in search of an honest man, he would probably, after all, be as likely to find such a person amongst lawyers, as amongst any other class of society.

But to recur to the subject of *pocketing affronts*—My brother Jack, late one evening in January, proceeding in his gig to Southbarrow, was stopped on Bromley Hill by a highwayman, who presenting a pistol, furiously demanded his

money. I will not say that Jack took fright, but his horse did, and, with a violent plunge, galloped off at full speed. The highwayman's foot being struck by the wheel, he was immediately unhorsed and dashed on the ground; while his horse, now left to his own guidance, mechanically followed the vehicle.

Jack, in total ignorance of the whole proceeding, hearing the horse behind the gig, naturally concluded that the highwayman was in full pursuit, and expected every moment to have his brains blown out. However, on entering the town, he discovered his error to his great relief, and stopping at the inn, and desiring to speak to the landlord, he related the circumstance, and then delivered the horse to him, ordering it to be immediately advertised according to the usual form—"If not owned nor demanded, within ten days from the date hereof, it will be peremptorily sold to defray expenses."

As may be supposed, the horse was neither owned or claimed, so therefore sold; and Jack *pocketing the affront*, cleared upwards of thirty pounds by what he called, "*robbing a highwayman.*"

Among theatrical events, during the season of this year, (1782,) the principal was the success of Mrs. Siddons. Garrick's previous dismission of her, and her triumphant return, are facts too notorious to render a detailed repetition necessary. From the commencement of her career in tragedy till the termination, I can only say,

"—— The form and cause conjoined,
Preaching to stones would make them capable."

No tragic actress, I believe, had ever such absolute dominion over her audiences as Mrs. Siddons: nor were her audiences common and indiscriminating, for, in addition to a splendid display of the principal rank and fashion of the period, I have frequently seen in the orchestra, Burke, Wyndham, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, all testifying an equal admiration of her commanding talents.

The late Mr. Harris used to say, that he had more cause to praise and admire her, than even Sheridan himself; for, she brought as full houses to Covent Garden, as to Drury-lane, though the former paid her no salary. The fact was, that on Mrs. Siddons's nights, Mr. Harris (being sure of an overflow from Drury-lane,) only put up his weakest bills, reserving the

strongest for his *off nights*; thus, probably, at the end of the week the average amount of the receipts was in his favour.

About two years after the appearance of Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Crawford, (previously Mrs. Barry,) dining with us in the Adelphi, and hearing all the junior part of the family lauding the new Melpomene, vexed and disconcerted, she told us we knew nothing of the matter.

“The Garrick school,” she cried, “was all *rapidity* and *passion*, while the Kemble school, was so full of *paw* and *pause*, that, at first, the performers, thinking their new competitors had either lost their cues, or forgotten their parts, used frequently to prompt them.”

Mrs. Crawford was still so great a favourite with our whole family, both on and off the stage, that we did not pursue the argument; though the majority of us thought, whatever was the school to which Mrs. Siddons belonged, she was the finest proficient we ever beheld.

During this and the following year, the political horizon was so clouded, and thrown into such a state of “confusion worse confounded,” that probably it may not prove unamusing to narrate briefly a few of the events.

In the latter end of March, Lord North, and his colleagues in office resigned, and on the 30th of the same month, the Rockingham administration came into power. Lord Effingham being appointed Treasurer of the Household, my father, for the second time in his life, became a government man; but, Lord Rockingham dying on July the first, and the Shelburne administration, with William Pitt as Chancellor of the Exchequer, immediately commencing, Lord Effingham resigned, and my father suddenly found himself again in opposition.

The Shelburne party being removed during the following April, by the coalition of Lord North and Fox, the latter came into power. My father, like many other politicians, then completely poised, used to shake his head, smile, and say, “I don’t know which side to take now.”

In December of the same year, North and Fox losing their places, owing to the India Bill, Pitt then returned into office, not only as Chancellor of the Exchequer, but also as first Lord of the Treasury.

Here was a singular scene in politics; **FIVE** administrations in little more than *one year and a half!* What politician could

avoid (if I may use the expression) *weathercocking* it, and being in the course of a few weeks, whig and tory, zealous reformer and staunch loyalist. However, notwithstanding all their pliant tergiversations and concessions, few had sufficient tact to accord with so many kings—and kings with such short reigns. Indeed, even the original Vicar of Bray himself, must ultimately have been foiled in the attempt to avoid an exposure of the system, of constantly repeating on the same subject, “*aye*,” one day, and “*no*,” the next.

As the reverse of this unprecedented political fluctuation, allow me to mention that the Pitt administration commencing in 1683, lasted nearly twenty years. Such was the lofty and independent spirit and bearing of this great minister, it was often said of him, that during the whole of this long and arduous period, “He had never once seen the floor of the House of Commons.”

So much for politics,—now for quackery on a smaller scale. At the same period flourished one of the most successful votaries at the shrine of notoriety; I alluded to Doctor Graham, whose electrical apparatus, *celestial bed*, and *goddess of health*, had obtained him this enviable distinction. Daily, he attracted overflowing audiences, and the back of our house being opposite to the back of his, we occasionally took a view of his performance gratis. This was a cause of sore discontent to the Doctor, and of many a rebuke for us.

But a much more heavy cause of complaint against us, was our martial habit of discharging from our first floor window, with all the force of fingers, thumbs and arms, and with an unerring aim, paper pellets, full against the eager visages of the Doctor’s patients. This excited the enemy’s anger to such a degree, that, one evening, we received an anonymous letter, evidently written by him, stating that he and his spectators were compelled, to the positive detriment of their systems, to close the windows on the hottest day, “lest a paper pellet, with a pin in its end, be conveyed to the eye. Beware, or you shall hear more from a *TERRACE OBSERVER*.”

To this, we briefly replied,

“DEAR DOCTOR,

“ ‘Tis not true that our pellets are charged with a pin,
But supposing they are, pray where is the sin?
Grant we put *out* your eye—well, you’ll *put* it in.

Yours, “A JOHN-STREET OBSERVER.”

Add to all these “veritable sources of grief,” that one of our particular friends testified the most marked predilection for the person of the Doctor’s principal performer. Luckily, or unluckily, however, just as the lover’s flame was growing into a conflagration, the *Goddess of Health* fell sick and *died*; owing, as the wags said, to a cold given by the damp sheets of the *celestial* bed.

“Every man at forty,” it is said, “is either a fool or a physician;” some are both, but this doctor was neither. He knew the town, and knew, that, only by glaring deviations from the common path, and by alarming or surprising the multitude, he could pass the regular practitioner. Without doing any public harm I believe, he certainly did himself much good; and in truth, if there be blame in these transactions, it should rest with the audience, not with the performer—

“The town, as usual, met him in full cry,
The town, as usual, knew no reason why.

Speaking of doctors, I believe the first great hoax ever practised, occurred about this period. Physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, amounting, at least, to the number of fifty, received letters to attend at ten o’clock in the morning, on a well-known wealthy lawyer, residing close to the Thames, at the end of Essex-street, which was then, as it is now, a complete *cul-de-sac*. Soon after the appointed hour, six carriages arrived, then, in an instant, many more. After much parley, rage and confusion, some of the doctors, finding they had been deceived, ordered their coachmen to turn and drive to their real patients. Then came the hoaxter’s triumph;—above twenty medical flats were preparing to get out of the street, while a more than equal number were as violently struggling to get into it.

This small *cul-de-sac* being now completely blockaded, the original cause of action was, as usual, speedily forgotten; and the doctors and their servants passed the remainder of the

morning in polemical disquisitions in an *alto* key, and in general abuse and retort.

Though some invalids suffered, perhaps, by this jest, others, in their own opinion, benefited; at least Lord Effingham used to say, “To this facetious event I owed my life, for I sent for Doctor C—— and he *could not come.*”

Undoubtedly, his Lordship was not very partial to the faculty, for once, when my brother Richard said, “What a wonderful climate Greenland’s must be, since the natives live there to the age of one hundred years, *without* medical men,” his Lordship replied, “Then what a much more wonderful climate England’s must be, since they live here one hundred years *with* them.”

During this summer, my father’s uncle, Mr. Macey, arrived in England, from Portugal. He had resided in Lisbon ever since a period, prior, by a few years, to the dreadful earthquake in November, 1755. Don’t be alarmed, reader; I am not preparing to detail a full, true and particular account of this well-known calamity; but I will content myself with stating, in the words of a late traveller, who, after a tedious expatiation on the horrors of the scene, thus concludes—“this earthquake had the *honour* of being noticed by the Royal Society.” As Manly says in the *Provoked Husband*, “What a well-bred age do we live in.”*

One circumstance the old gentleman used to relate, (not a magazine, nor gazetteer one) struck me particularly; I allude to the sudden influx of morality into the town, on the cessation of the earthquake. So determined were the poor, panic stricken survivors, on an immediate confession and repentance, that, even in that land of priesthood, the priests and confessors literally staggered under their overwhelming accession of business. Persons, long supposed married, hastened to expose the criminality of their connection, by a public celebration of the nuptial ceremony, and husbands hoped to pacify heaven by transferring their affections from their mistresses

* My uncle was on the Tagus, at the time the earthquake occurred. To this circumstance, in all probability, he owed the preservation of his life. Still, he encountered great danger, for many vessels were driven from their moorings, and cast on the shore; while others, though in deep water, actually struck the ground, in consequence of the violent heavings of the bed of the river.

to their wives. Children, hitherto unacknowledged, found parents, and orphans protectors; frauds were avowed, where even suspicion was not attached, and restitution promised to the second and third generations, for the aggressions that had been practised in the first; owners were found for almost forgotten crimes; and enemies, become friends, sought and afforded mutual assistance.

According to M. de Lavaysse, these same effects occurred after the earthquakes at Quito and Caraccas. What can so fully pourtray the horrors of the cause!

My uncle's motive for visiting England, was chiefly business; though, partly for the advantage of his ward, a young Portuguese lady, to whom, two years previously, he had been appointed guardian by her deceased father; a gentleman of good family, but small fortune.

Olivia Garcias was the name of the fair foreigner. She had no mother, no relative, indeed no dependence, save on Mr. Macey. She was in her nineteenth year, extremely beautiful, and not rendered less interesting, by the fixed and peculiar melancholy on her countenance; a melancholy apparently arising from some secret grief. This supposition received considerable credit, owing to Mr. Macey's reserved and mysterious manner, whenever any inquiries were made as to her history.

My father, at this time, had a new client, in Mr. Edward B——; a gentleman lately returned from a prolonged sojourn on the Continent. He possessed a pleasing person, with great literary acquirements, and inherited a large patrimonial estate.

One day, soon after my uncle's arrival, Mr. B——'s carriage stopped at the door, and my father being engaged in the parlour, ordered his young and fashionable client to be shown into the drawing-room, where my aunt and I were sitting with the captivating Olivia, in vain endeavouring to enliven and amuse her.

Mr. B—— entered the room. My aunt and I, perceiving a stranger, rose to receive him, whilst our fair visiter, in a state of abstraction, with her eyes fixed on the ground, remained in utter unconsciousness of the presence of an additional person. Advancing towards my aunt, he was proceeding to pay her his compliments, when, discovering Olivia, he sud-

denly became violently agitated, and rushing towards her, tenderly took and pressed her hand. Surprised, she raised her eyes, and then with a suppressed scream, hastily retired from the room. He was about to follow her, but Mr. Macey entering at that moment, detained him. My aunt and I immediately retired; and after a short private conference with my uncle, Mr. B—— departed.

This accidental rencontre naturally led to the recital of poor Olivia's story. It appeared, that early in the previous autumn, Mr. B——, arriving in Lisbon, was by a mutual friend, introduced to my uncle. Consequently, he was invited to the house, and after a few interviews, it became evident that the young Englishman was much struck by the beauty, mind and engaging manners of Mr. Macey's ward.

“New to the world, admiring, half afraid;
Sweet were the blushes of the vernal maid.”

These, and other symptoms, soon obviously proclaimed that the interest excited was not wholly confined to the stranger. Mr. Macey, however, being pleased with him, allowed their intimacy to increase; and the result was, that in the course of a few weeks, Olivia became as much attached to her lover, as her lover was to her. Deeming his intentions strictly honourable, my father's uncle continued to encourage his addresses; but, at length, considering himself bound by his duty, as a guardian, to effect a satisfactory explanation, he took an opportunity of addressing her suitor as follows.

“I presume, Sir, you intend to avow your affection for my ward.”

“I do, Sir,” he replied, energetically; “I love her most truly, and most fervently!”

“Well, then,” rejoined Mr. Macey, “I am authorized to declare, she will give her hand where her heart is already bestowed.”

Olivia's admirer hesitated, apparently much embarrassed.

“Don't be dejected, Sir,” cried the old gentleman, encouragingly; “you do not think I shall withhold my consent?—provided—you understand—the necessary arrangements, previously to marriage, are settled.”

"Marriage!" repeated the lover, turning pale; as if that word, "shot from the deadly level of a gun, was sent to murder him."

"What, Sir!" exclaimed my alarmed uncle; "dare you—in one word, Sir, explain. Is my ward designed to be the victim of artifice, or the reward of honourable love?"

"Pity me, Sir!" was the lover's impressive reply, after a pause, during which, he vainly struggled to regain his self-possession.

"Your intention, then, is not to marry her, but——"

"Would to heaven," interrupted Mr. B——, passionately, "I could marry her, and—at present I can proceed no further—allow the conversation to terminate—you shall speedily receive an explanation, decisive as to your future conduct, and fatally destructive to my happiness!"

He then abruptly retired, leaving my uncle in a state of astonishment and dismay. The same afternoon, a letter arrived from Mr. B——, explaining the mystery.

He was already married!

My uncle immediately wrote, and requesting him to discontinue his visits, bade him farewell for ever.

Not so Olivia Garcias. Though her honour remained untainted, love's poison had too deeply insinuated itself, to be of easy extraction. When she heard that the man, who had sole possession of her heart, had departed, she knew not whither, without one soothing word or line, grief preyed so fatally on her mind and spirits, that the body yielded to their joint attacks, and medical advice was found absolutely necessary. Change of air and scene being prescribed, she repaired to a villa near Cintra on the banks of the Tagus, and three leagues distant from Lisbon.

Here she was placed under the protection of a Portuguese gentleman, who was in partnership with my father's uncle, and whose family and establishment were deemed sufficiently numerous to frustrate any sinister or daring attempt.

One evening, however, after a large dinner party, all had departed on an excursion to the mountains, except Olivia, whose strength was not considered adequate to the fatigue. Taking a book, she retired to the lawn, which stretched, with a gentle descent, to the banks of the Tagus. She had not read above an hour, when her attention was attracted by a

handsome yacht, which she recollects to have observed on the previous day. It came to an anchorage in the middle of the river, when part of the crew descended into a small boat, and rowed rapidly towards the shore; which, being attained, one of them disembarked and proceeded to ascend the lawn. Greatly alarmed, Olivia would have retreated, but she was gently detained; when, turning to free herself from the intruder, she discovered the false, but not forgotten, Edward.

“Hear me, Olivia,” he exclaimed: “we have not a moment to lose—I have watched you day after day; and as this is the first, so it may prove the last hope of obtaining your freedom. Come, therefore, and instead of being divided, or united, by cold, legal forms, we will sail for Italy, and there enjoy the heaven of a pure, unceasing love!” Olivia remained silent and motionless. “I implore you not to pause!” he passionately exclaimed, “I hear footsteps—we shall be discovered—come, come!” seizing her hand, and attempting to hurry her towards the river.

Overcome by mingled sensations of love and terror, Olivia burst into tears, and reclined her head on his shoulder. Wild with joy at his supposed triumph, he lost all self-command, and clasping her ardently to his heart, pressed his grateful kisses on her lips.

Recalling her wandering recollection, and breaking from him with all the pride of restored virtue, she exclaimed:—

“Leave me, leave me, Sir, never to meet again! To *her* who claims these proofs of your attachment, to *her* return. Disturb no more the melancholy tranquillity of an unhappy orphan, who has been rendered doubly desolate by your unkindness—’Tis true, hitherto you have not deprived me of honour—no—you have only seduced my heart,—but, though it break in the contest, never shall it lead me into error and disgrace.”

“We will not part,” replied the distracted lover, and renewed his entreaties.

“For your own sake, Sir,” pointing to her numerous friends, who were descending the hill—“for your own sake, Sir, and theirs, I request you to depart—farewell, farewell for ever!” Thus speaking, she darted into the house; and he, overwhelmed with shame and disappointment, returned to the vessel.

Soon afterwards, Mr. Macey departed for England, and

thinking it hazardous to leave Olivia, brought her with him. During my uncle's recital, we all sympathized with the unfortunate heroine of this romantic tale; all, except my father, whose countenance exhibited more of anger than of pity. Having sent for Olivia, the moment she entered, he took her by the hand, and cried with animation.

"Don't be dejected, sweet girl? I will bring you through; I am now lawyer *for* your lover, but if he decline to do you justice, I will be lawyer *against* him. Probably, in your case, I should not be able to obtain very strong evidence—but what of that? It would not be the first action I have lost, nor will it be the last; I say before you all, he *shall* marry her, and now I'll go say the same to him!"

"Do not trifle with her feelings," cried Mr. Macey; "you know your young client is married."

"Nonsense!" said my father; "I will soon unmarry him!"

"Would that you could!" was the general exclamation.

"I can," he replied, and instantly departed; leaving all of us in the most excited state of surprise and curiosity.

He soon returned.

"I have," he proceeded, "seen Mr. B——, who has behaved like a man of honour, and solemnly pledged himself that his most ardent desire is to offer Olivia his hand, the moment his divorce shall have been procured."

"His *divorce*!" we all exclaimed.

"Aye," replied my father; "do you think I reckon without my host? His wife is an abandoned woman; at this moment living openly with another man, and if I had been sooner employed, I could have procured the "*e vinclis*" divorce before now; but your lover got into one of the *slow-wagon offices*, and, as usual, I am compelled to redeem *their* lost time. But we will, eh, Jack?—for, if in common cases we go a good trot, I think, in Olivia's case, we may manage to gallop."

So sanguine was my father as to the speedy and happy termination of the affair, that Mr. B—— was immediately received at our house, as an accepted lover. For many days, their happiness seemed only to increase; but, at the expiration of three months, such little progress was effected in the divorce cause, and my father, to exculpate himself, talked so much of delay in other quarters, of the absence of witnesses, and of the *certainty* of the law's *uncertainty*, that the lovers'

and guardian's fears and impatience knowing no bounds, they began to dread that the suit would be either lost or interminable.

I will not say that my father's was the *slow wagon office*; certainly, however, it has been previously shown that we did not *always* gallop.

One evening, after dinner, while we were as usual endeavouring to urge him into rapidity, Osborne (the proprietor of the Hotel opposite us) was introduced on business; when he informed my father, one of his inmates, a lady, (who a few days previously had arrived from France in a weak state of health) found her strength so rapidly decaying, that she was most anxious to have her worldly affairs immediately settled by a legal adviser. As soon as he had made this communication, Osborne retired, urging my father to follow him instantly.

Instantly, being a common sense, and not a common law term, my father paused, and said, "Probably she only speaks French—in that case, you had better go, Jack, as I am afraid I have forgotten all mine"—"I will," replied Jack, "after the next glass;" and then, the conversation recurring with redoubled ardour to Olivia and the divorce, the new client was awhile totally forgotten.

Another visit from Osborne reminded them of their neglect; and he frankly avowed, that if my father could not instantly attend the lady, application must be made for other professional assistance.

Jack then rose and, after one more glass, departed. In about half an hour he returned, much shocked and affected by the interview. He said, that when in health, the unfortunate stranger must have been a woman of considerable personal attraction, and though now evidently in a dying state, she dictated her last intentions with a feeling and firmness, that at once excited his pity and admiration. He brought with him a rough draught of the will, for my father's perusal and revision.

"Short and sweet, I vow," said my father. "She has left blanks, I see, for the name of the principal devisee, and for that of the executor. These, I presume, she intends to fill up herself?"

"She does," replied my brother; "and she wished also

that her own servants should be the witnesses to her signature, instead of me or any of your clerks. And she added, that when the will shall be signed, to prevent accidents, she would send you a counterpart."

A will was completed on that evening, and immediately despatched by my father to Osborne's. On the same night, he received the promised counterpart, with positive directions not to open it, until after the decease of the testatrix; and in an accompanying envelope, a ten pound bank note, as a remuneration for his trouble.

On inquiry, the following morning, the unfortunate lady was found to be considerably worse, and in the evening she expired. My father then opened the will; and in the presence of Olivia, her lover, and the whole family, commenced reading it, but not aloud. Our curiosity having been already considerably excited by the mystery attached to the stranger, we all anxiously observed my father's countenance, which, to our surprise, suddenly displayed strong emotion and agitation. Before, however, we could ask the cause, raising his eyes from the document, and fixing them on Olivia, he exclaimed, in a hurried faltering tone,

"Olivia! to whom do you suppose this ill-fated person bequeaths her whole property?"

He then read aloud as follows:—

"Give—devise—bequeath—that freehold estate, called _____, and all other property I die possessed of, to my *wronged husband*, Edward B_____, now residing in London, and whom I implore, as the last request of a misled, though attached *wife*, to follow to the grave, his once loved Eleanor; and there to bury with her all his just resentment."

Thus terminated the divorce. In a few days the youthful widower attended the unfortunate Eleanor to the grave; and within the following half-year, the happy Olivia to the altar.

In the course of two or three years they returned with Mr. Macey to Portugal, where they remained till his death. Mr. B_____ afterwards encountered some heavy losses in his speculations in the North of England, where fifteen years ago, I passed some time with them at the house of a joint friend—and even now, I have not lost sight of them, since only last summer, I heard they were residing in Italy—though old, healthy—though married, happy.

CHAPTER V.

FRANCE, FLANDERS, AND GERMANY, DURING THE
AMERICAN WAR.

“Were it permitted, he’d make the tour of the whole system of the sun.”
POPE—*Prolegomena of Martinus Scriblerus.*

HITHERTO, my father was a most successful man, and to do him justice, his family participated most fully in his prosperity. Unfortunately, however, for himself and his relations, in consequence of his estate at Dominica proving totally unproductive, and of Sayre the banker suspending payment, my father, at length, became involved in pecuniary difficulties.

Sayre was his intimate friend, as well as client, and when committed to the Tower, left his whole case to my father’s management. The result of the impeachment was unsuccessful, as it regarded Sayre’s personal liberty; but, to his property, it must have been most injurious; as it led to the propagation of the most hostile reports, and thus probably became the chief cause of his most unexpected embarrassments.

Having advanced money to, and accepted numerous accommodation bills for Mr. Sayre, my father suddenly found himself a creditor to a large extent. As, however, he had insured a great part of the sum on Sayre’s, and also on Purdon’s life, (who suffered by Sayre’s misfortunes,) he hoped ultimately to have been no loser by the disaster; but, as will be seen hereafter, this insurance, instead of diminishing the losses of the family, only increased them.

So sudden a change of affairs produced a grand commotion in the family, and, as is the custom on such occasions, the immediate cry was, “Something must be done!” For a few days we all fluently proclaimed an absolute necessity for a retrenchment and economy, that, in course were never practised; for we had too long revelled in the lap of luxury to submit

suddenly to privations; and therefore, though we all agreed that our proposal was the only effective one, none had sufficient fortitude to commence the example.

My father, who always took the bright side, used to cheer us, and cry, “ Give me only time to turn myself about, and something must soon *turn up turnips*—I have plenty of friends, plenty of clients, and plenty of property—in perspective. But, as I am myself pushed at present, I have no alternative but to push others—I have written to Lord Grandison, who is now at Spa; and if I do not receive a satisfactory answer in the course of a day or two, I shall send you, Fred, personally to state my necessities, and apply for payment of part of his large debt.”

The idea of this continental trip to a boy of my age, was alone most highly gratifying; but to be selected as the family man of business—the *charge d'affaires* on a grand mission, made me almost wild with joy.

No answer arriving from Lord Grandison, and my father being necessitated to demand the money, after a farewell, painful to myself and the whole family, on August the 11th, 1782, I started on my embassy.

In the midst of all my grief, however, I did not forget to take with me a small note-book, which I purposed filling with a “ *presis historique*” of my amours, adventures and adversities, as reminiscences for the composition of an elaborate—I could not determine whether it should be an octavo or quarto. So, after a cursory deliberation, I determined to defer judgment, until my return should have informed me of the extent and nature of the stock, with which I was to market. Then, opening my little common-place book, and smoothing the first page, with a glowing face and swelling heart, I inscribed on it,

A TOUR
THROUGH FRANCE, FLANDERS,
AND
PART OF GERMANY,
DURING THE AMERICAN WAR,
AT
THE AGE OF SEVENTEEN.

The moment I had finished the title-page I felt all the consequence of manhood—"I will correct abuses, expose the vicious, and laud the honest," thought I.

Having reached Dartford, I commenced my diary, which I will here insert, thus effecting at *sixty* the hope of *seventeen*—publication:—

August the 11th. Left all I hold dear on earth—my friends, my country, and, though last, not least, my mistress. Proceeded towards Dartford, having fifteen pounds in cash, and a bill on a banker at Brussels for double that sum—heavy companions, heavy chaise, and heavy heart—arrived at our inn before ten in the evening, and then to bed. Blackheath, Sophia, adieu!

August the 12th. Got into the Dover Ark—'twas as full of smells as of people—phugh! the very sight of the little fat Frenchman opposite me, threw my stomach into a state of rebellion—O that *Etna* were a soap-manufactory, and the great sea, a washing tub! for here is neither the perfume of the rose, the eglantine, nor the clematis, but—. After passing through several towns, one of which is Canterbury,* Comte de Grasse overtook us on his way to France, as a prisoner at large. He is the lion of the French navy, and "*brave comme son épée.*" When, on the glorious 12th of April, his ship, the *Ville de Paris*, surrendered to the *Barfleur*, there were but three men alive on the upper deck.

When we arrived at Dover—could get no bed unless I chose to sleep with a fat hostess—but *Adonis* would not bed with *Hecate*, so waited till Mr. Harvey, of the Ship, accommodated me with a chamber, but distressed me with two companions to share it—lay down with the intention of dreaming of Sophia—O, Sophia!

August the 13th. The elements were so loud and boisterous last night I could not sleep—ergo, disturbed my companions by talking of Sophia—a brig was driven on shore, and several boats escaped from their moorings—I rose early and took a view of Dover, and the fine old Castle, which was built at different times by Earl Goodwin, by the Normans under Sir John de Fienne, by Edward the Fourth and Queen Mary—there is a Roman Pharos and camp on the same cliff. Me-

* I could not resolve to repress this truly boyish piece of information.

morandum—Good opportunity this for me to show my reading—visited Shakspeare's Cliff, and cried—

—“Here's the place—how fearful,
And dizzy 'tis to rest one's eyes so low!”

Doctor Johnson does not think this particularly clever.—Mem. Cut him up. At noon three of the best packets were ready to sail: Comte de Grasse went on board one; Lord Cholmondeley, another; and I, and the canaille, occupied the third. Dover and its pier were shaken to their foundation by acclamations, when we three heroes quitted the harbour, and bets were laid as to which of us would first reach Calais—.

“Farewell to England; for a time farewell
To all the follies that in England dwell.”

At first we were behind the other packets above a mile, but in about half an hour we overtook, and passed Comte de Grasse; in another half-hour we came alongside Lord Cholmondeley's vessel, and sailed so near it, and with such equal rapidity, that for a considerable time we could hear every word which was spoken on board; the sailors and the vulgar, roaring mutual defiance and abuse. At length we passed them, and entered Calais above a quarter of an hour before the first of the other vessels, amidst the beating of drums, the flourish of trumpets, the pealing of bells, and the thunder of cannon. Add to all these warlike appendages, the hundreds (I think I might say the thousands,) of military, that lined the pier and quay, and an individual, not in the secret, would have imagined that the good people of Calais, expected the invasion of a conquering army, not the arrival of a defeated hero.

When we brought to, the whole of the immense crowd collected near us, in order to catch a first glimpse of the Comte, who, *in course*, was in the first vessel;—for, could the winds be so *bête*, as to give an Englishman precedence? The noise was hushed, the confusion was tranquillized, and all stood motionless, searching with protruding eyes, for the appearance of their vanquished hero; when in the very acme of the intensity of their anxiety, forth trotted I, the other hero, with a bundle in my hand, and a dizziness in my head. From sheer envy, they hooted, hissed, hustled, and called me “*rosbif*,” and “*goddam*;” but, neither thinking nor caring for any thing,

except my dinner, I cut my way through the ugly dogs, and proceeded for Monsieur Dessein's, where I got excellent cheer, and again found that,

“ *Food makes the man, the want of it the fellow.*”

Monsieur Dessein is a civil, well spoken man of the ancient regime; with a specious address, and an unlimited attention to his visitors. His tail and curls were of a form and size, that made them an irresistible object of attraction to my eyes. In return, my leather breeches seemed to excite an equal, and more universal attention. *Simplex munditiis*, the master, and *simplicis pulchritudinis*, the breeches, we are both, evidently, the first of our kinds that have ever appeared amongst this factitious race.

I was full of Sterne, and this was Sterne's Dessein. I desired eagerly to converse with him about the former, but knew not how to commence.

At length, however, *apropos des bottes*, as the French say, I asked him without preface, whether he remembered “ Monsieur Sterne?” The good old *aubergiste* smiled, and replying in the affirmative, one word led to another, till his presence being suddenly required elsewhere, he hastily concluded in the following manner:—

“ Your countryman, Monsieur Sterne, von, great, von very great man, and he carry me vid him to posterity. He gain moche money by his Journey of Sentiment—mais moi—I—make more through de means of dat than he, by all his ouvrages reunies—Ha, ha!” Then, as if in imitation of Sterne, he laid his forefinger on my breast, and said in a voice lowered almost to a whisper, “ *Qu'en pensez vous?*” and then departed.

After dinner, I took a walk over the town. There is a fine convent in the market-place, and what I equally liked, a fine *café*; went to the play, and afterwards supped with a Chevalier of the order of St. Louis, Monsieur Chamang. His two daughters are lovely girls; the eldest of whom, understanding I did not speak French, said in a low tone to her sister, “ *Mon dieu! quel grand nez?*”—“ *Oui,*” replied the younger, “ *c'est comme un vrai bec de perroquet.*”

August the 14th—Wanting to walk on the pier, I asked the *garçon*, (who spoke English very tolerably,) the French for it.

He, thinking as *Milord Anglais*, I could mean nothing but *peer*, a lord, replied *paire*. Away I then went, and passing over the market-place and draw-bridge, stumbled on the *pier*; without having had occasion to inquire my way to it, by the garçon's novel appellation. There, I remained, "strutting my half hour," till dinner-time.

At the *table d'hôte*, the commandant of the troops of the town sat next me; and among other officers and gentlemen at the table, were the President of the Council at Ratisbon, a Russian Count, and several Prussians; in all amounting to about twenty, not one of whom, (as it appeared to me) spoke a word of English, except a remarkably pretty Irish woman.

I thought I could never please a Frenchman so much as by praising his town; "Monsieur," I said condescendingly to the commandant, "*J'ai vu votre paire*," meaning I have seen your *pier*; but which he naturally understood, I have seen your *père*, father. This address from a perfect stranger, surprised him; "*Il est beau, et grand, Monsieur*," I continued. The commandant examined me from head to foot with an astonishment, that imparted to me an almost equal share. I saw there was a mistake, and I attempted to explain by pronouncing very articulately.

"*Oui, Monsieur, j'ai vu votre paire, votre paire sur le havre.*"

"*Eh bien, Monsieur,*" replied the commandant, "*et que disait il?*"

I was astounded, and, looking round the room for the keeper to the supposed madman, I discovered the eyes of the whole company were upon me.

"Monsieur," I cried, again attempting to explain, with as much deliberation and precision, and in as good French as I could command, "*Monsieur, est-il possible que vous résidez ici, et que vous ne connoissez pas votre paire—votre paire si—si long!*"

This speech naturally only increased the incomprehensibility of the whole conversation; and the commandant beginning, in rather *haut en bas* terms, to demand an explanation, like all cowards, when driven into a corner I became desperate.

"*Messieurs,*" I cried, somewhat boisterously; "*il faut que vous connoissez votre paire! Le paire de votre ville qui est*

fait de pierre, et a la tête de bois,—et a ce moment on travaille a lui racommoder sa fin, a laquelle le vent a fait du mal!"

This was the *coup de grace* to all decorum; every Frenchman abandoned himself to his laughter, till the room fairly shook with their shouts; and even the astonished commandant himself could not help joining them.

"Allow me, sir," said a gentleman, sitting by the side of the Irish lady, and whom I had not previously observed.

"My dear sir," interrupted I, "you are an Englishman, pray, pray explain."

"Sir," he replied, "you have just told this gentleman," pointing to the commandant, "that his father is the father of the whole town; that he is made of stone, but has a wooden head; and at this moment the workmen are engaged in mending his end that the wind has damaged."

I was paralyzed. "Tell me," I cried, as if my life had depended on his answer, "what is the French for *pier*?"

"*Jetée*, or, according to the common people, *pont*," he replied.

I had scarcely sense enough left to assist the Englishman in his good-natured attempts to unravel the error. He succeeded, however, and then commenced in French, an explanation to the officers. At this moment, the waiter informed me the St. Omer Diligence was about to depart. I rushed from the scene of my disgrace, and stepped into the vehicle, just as the termination of the Englishman's recital, exploded an additional *eclat de rire*, at my expense.*

In the coach, was a coquette of seventy. I forgot the name of the French princess who died without absolution, because the priest would not receive her confession while her cheeks were rouged; but I remember that the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield

* As some excuse for my mistaking words so similar in sound; let it be remembered how many words of the same orthography convey meanings totally opposed, according as he who employs them inhabits one or other little spot on our little globe. Ex. gra. *THE*, with us, is an article, but in France, *the* is tea; *CARE*, with us, is a foe to cowards, but in Italy, *cane* is a dog; *MARE*, with us, is a horse, but *mare* with the Latina, was the sea; *PIE*, with us, is a pastry-cook preparation; but *pie* with the Spaniards, is a foot. Thus, the Italians are bit by our *cane*, while we make a *pie* of a Spaniard's *foot*: and thus the Latins used to turn all our *horses* into the sea, while the gluttonous French, *mirabile dictu*, absolutely eat our *definite article*!

was the actress, whose principal anxiety when dying, concerned the arrangement of the unbecoming dress of death. Alas, alas, "*toute femme est coquette!*"

My old lady was a complete character; high head, large hoop, which she was obliged to support perpendicularly, to the complete exposure of a pair of spindle ankles, between which lay fast asleep a fat poodle dog; huge surbelows, a calash, and a sort of feather-bed prominence, that, like Falstaff's, had impeded her view of her knee for an almost incalculable time.

Unluckily, the old gentlewoman's conversation proving as common-place as her person was peculiar, I derived none of my expected amusement; so, fell asleep, nor awakened until we reached St. Omer,—a dull and dreary town.

The next day we dined at Bourbourg; the little voracious fat Frenchman, who sat opposite to me, must indubitably have been the identical glutton, who, eating for a wager, won by a *pig and an apple-pie*.

Supt, but not slept at Dunkirk; for, owing to the fulness of the inn, after I had entered my chamber, the chambermaid lighted in a Dutch burgomaster to share my bed with me. Mercy on us!—"Misery accustoms a man to strange bedfellows," but, oh Sophia, never to a Dutch burgomaster!—Retired, leaving Mynheer to sleep with another Mynsrow.

August the 15th and 16th. At Dunkirk and Ferne—passed through both without seeing either.—Mem. Remember to read Nugent's *Grand Tour*, and the *History of Flanders*, when I return.

August the 17th.

"Oh, day most foul, as in the best it is."

On board the bark from Ferne to Bruges, were five tremendous, female, Flemish fiends. Hail, ye happy times of Paganism, that owned but three furies—now, alas! there are five!

Their caps were larger than their hoops—their heads were larger than their caps—their bosoms were larger than their heads,—and their terminations were larger than all put together. They must have been the real, lineal descendants of Reubens' models, when he painted the dismemberment of Orpheus, by the infuriated matrons. Whoever has seen this picture may form a faint idea of their persons; but, what cop-

persmith, frog-eatcher, or bag-piper, can imagine the infernal noise to which I can compare their voices?

“Worse than the language Discord speaks
In Welshwomen, ‘mongst beds of leeks;
Or the confused and horrid sounds
Of Irish in potato grounds.”

At one o’clock, these five magnitudinous monsters descended to dinner; and with such unparalleled obstinacy did they commence and pursue the attack, that at two o’clock its ardour had not a jot abated. I had scarcely tasted food that day, yet, even if I had had the inclination to have repicked the bones of their *bouilli*, I could not have reached them, so gorged was the cabin with this mass of flesh and frailty. Thus was I obliged to remain on deck almost devoured by hunger, and turning from every gust, lest it should increase my appetite; while every pause in their abominable jargon, waisted to my ears the clash of the knife and fork.

The only other passenger on the deck was a gigantic monk; a more portly person, or more jolly countenance, I think I never beheld. Our solitariness induced us to approach each other, and at last we entered into conversation.

“*Benedicite, my son!*” he cried in a voice of thunder; “*Catholicus es?*”

“*Non, Monsieur,*” I replied.

“Then you are a fool, my son,” he rejoined, in a tone not very appropriate to the annunciation; and then continued, “What is the reason, my son, that you English can not remain in your own country, like other people, but rush forth, like Goths and Suevi, to eat and to drink the good things of your neighbours? When I was in Italy, whither I went on a pilgrimage to our Lady of Loretto—‘*Sancta Maria ora pro nobis!*’ and kissed the floor of the Casa Sancta, and the hem of the Pope’s garment—‘*benedictum sit nomen Papæ*’—when I was in Italy, I say, all the towns were crammed with English, and the plebeian Italians reported, that, as a punishment for their damnable and heretical doctrines, the English were possessed with devils, who compelled them, against their wills, eternally to wander from their homes over the face of the globe—is this true? if it be, in ‘*Domini nomine exorciso te!*’”

While we were pursuing this subject, which he interlarded

with humorous and recondite allusions to cloisters, legends, St. Eusebius, and on his travels, the rain which had been dribbling for the last few minutes, began to descend in torrents. Neither to the right nor left was there any shelter, and to enter the cabin was impossible.

The monk, wrapped in his immense robe of coarse woolen serge, and drawing his cowl over his head, defied the rain; which turned from his ancient surtout of grease and dirt with as much aversion as it would have manifested for a tallow candle.

I was on the point of being drenched, when opening this huge garment the monk cried, "Come, my little cuckoo, here is your nest," and as soon as I had entered, he folded it over me.

What was my astonishment, when I began to examine my new domicile, to find that my amusing acquaintance conjoined to his friarship the respectable trades of itinerant carpenter and chandler. At least, so it would appear; for, in his girdle, were a mallet, a saw, a chisel, a gimlet and a gouge. But my attention was soon attracted to another quarter of the premises, where I scented lodgers, for whom, my interior apartments would have found a most willing accommodation; following my nose, I groped till I discovered bread, some good Gruyére, cold hard boiled eggs, and delicate little shalots.

I just protruded my head from an orifice in my abode, and cried in English, "Father, father, I have a spacious eating-house at your service." He did not understand me, and replied in Italian,

"*Non comprendo—San Giuseppe, che linguaggio corrotto è questo?"*"*

"Father, father," I repeated in my French, "may I eat, may I eat?"

"*Imo filius meus,*" he rejoined immediately.

I did not wait for a second assent, but commenced my attack with the appetite of another Judas.

"*Caratach—Art thou not hungry?*

"*Judas* — — — *Monstrous hungry!*

"*Caratach—He looks*

Like Hunger's self—get him some victuals—
— — — *Upon my conscience,*

* I don't comprehend you—St. Joseph, what barbarous language is that?

The poor rogue has not eat this month! how terribly
He charges!

—— Eat softly!
You'll choke, you knave, else"—

This luncheon was soon dispatched, and I then found that it had produced the unpleasant effect of exciting, rather than of allaying, my appetite. Like a wolf in quest of prey, the sheep being absent, I determined to venture into the den of the infernal shepherdesses. I descended the cabin stairs, and saw that two had retired, heaven knows where, and that not a crumb, nor edible particle of any description, was to be discovered!

The remaining three, gorged, bloated, sat swinging, or sleeping on their chairs, completely subdued by the re-action of the previous over-exertion. With a twinging expression of countenance, I observed several of them contract their deformed persons; then manifest an increased uneasiness; then, — There is a line in Horace, quoted from Ennius, as a specimen of the true bombast:—

“ — Postquam Discordia tetra
Belli ferratos postes, portasque refregit.”

At length, heaven be praised, we reached Bruges, and after a substantial supper, I retired for the night, not to dream of Sophy, the loves, and the graces, but of *nightmares*, and *Flanders' mares*.

August the 18th.—Bruges—handsome town, with a noble tower—Mem. Don't mention the fine steeple, the builder throwing himself from it, and his dog following him—too hacknied.—Went to the play; bad actors, yet, a good house; this, *never* the case with discriminating John Bull!

August the 19th.—Ghent—formally called Gaunt, Gand or Gant. Here the Duke of Lancaster was born, that John of Gaunt, of whom Falstaff says, that “ he beat his own name,” when he laid hands on Shallow, “ whom you might have trussed, and all his apparel, into an eelskin”—Quære—To venture to mention that the name of this town induced Charles the Fifth to say, “ that he had *a glove*, which was alone worth more than the best of Francis's cities.”

Dined at the *table d'hôte*; and talking of the effect of regimen on the system, an old Englishman, (evidently a punster) observed, that though the ancients had recorded, as specimens of the most singular nourishment, that an ox used only to be a meal for Milo, a truss of clover for Heraclitus, and a dead man's head for Canidia, that he could find a much more extraordinary peculiarity in a citizen of this very town;—for Charles the Fifth, the Emperor, had not only *strengthened* himself, but *weakened* his opponents, by a *Diet of Worms*.

August the 20th.—Brussels—Arrived there at eleven o'clock in the night, and departed next morning before three, in a German Diligence—Oh, the hottest day!—Eleven people! Never shall I forget the little Frenchman afflicted with St. Vitus's dance, hitting, clawing and scratching the huge Dutchman next him. A scuffle ensued, and, as we were all seated on three legged wooden stools, unattached to the vehicle, the confusion may be imagined.

About seven in the following evening, we reached Liege, alias Whitechapel, alias Shoreditch. The Prince-Bishop's palace is a fine building, but its situation ruins its effect. The Germans are whimsical animals in their appearance. Their hats are as large as baskets, and as such they use them in the carriage of vegetables—Their heads and legs are of an enormous thickness. No wonder that Germany has so long disdained to be called a *Kingdom*, when each of the meanest of her female children has a pair of *pillars*, stout enough to support *two empires!*"

August the 22nd.—We were now within thirty miles of the most fashionable spot in Europe;—for which, at eleven in the morning, I departed in the Diligence, or by ellipsis, *Dili*. A more violent storm of thunder, lightning and rain, arose at night, than had ever before occurred in this country, within the recollection of the oldest inhabitants. The mountains are immense, and the waters rushed down them in torrents as rapid as the Rhine. It washed horses out of their stables, furniture out of the cottages, and destroyed almost all the cattle about Spa. Common fear made common friendships;—the dog, the cat and the rat, were seen descending the same stream, with every symptom of good fellowship; and the mouse floated by a platter of toasted cheese, without even giving it a desirous

leer. One part of the road we actually passed *à la nage*, and the waters poured in at the door of the *Dili*.

After having repeatedly wished my neck once fairly broken, to end the sufferings of a hundred imaginary fractures, the storm ceased, and we arrived safely at Spa—a place, to people of all ages, most delightful; but, to a *boy of seventeen*, for the first time his own master, alluring and fascinating in the extreme.

Lest the repetition of dates should weary my reader, I will, during my stay at Spa, suspend my diary, and proceed in the usual narrative form.

Fashion and gaming, reign co-Queens of Spa—as they do of Bath—True; but Bath is only a pretty and compact compendium of English fooleries; whereas, Spa contains those of Europe, from Cadiz to the Black Sea, from Malta to Moscow. Many Russians, many French, many Spaniards, many Germans; Dutch, English, Irish, Italians and Flemings; rogues, bullies, gamesters, seducers, adulterers and swindlers.—Thus I appeared a *rose among nettles*.

In the afternoon, I sent a note to Lord Grandison, informing him of my arrival, and enclosing the letter from my father, exhibiting my credentials. In the evening, I went to the *Ridotto*, which is certainly an extremely splendid and capacious building. The body of it is occupied by an immense ball-room, on either side of which are two fine rooms; the one for Faro, and the other for Hazard and Biribi. At the farther extremity is a handsome banquet table, covered with jellies, ices, fruit and pastry, behind which, sat the poisoners,—the pastry cooks;—each of whom, by his economical and scientific adulterations, most probably as richly merited a certain hot place, as he whom Quevedo sends thither, for a harmless substitution of flies for currants, in mincemeat.

On a given signal, the tables, poisons and poisoners are removed; and in their places, benches appear, with fiddles, fiddlers and the whole appurtenances of an orchestra. The apparent wall behind, then, rapidly withdrawing, discovers the proscenium of a pretty stage, on which a French play and *vaudeville* are usually well performed. When they are finished, the partition is reinstated, the refreshments return, and gambling and gallantry become the order of the evening.

When I arose on the following morning, I was not perfectly

at ease. At last, I was in the place of my destination, on the point of demanding £2500, from a rich and powerful peer; who, though he had formerly entertained me, most kindly and hospitably as a guest, might now, perchance, find both the will and the power, to molest me as a dun—I began to be nervous, but, endeavouring to reassure myself, departed on my visit to Lord Grandison.

His residence was a handsome chateau in the vicinity of the town. On inquiry, I learnt to my great relief, that his Lordship was gone to Aix-la-Chapelle, and no part of his family were at home. I begged the servants to show his Lordship, the instant he should return, the letter I had sent on the preceding day, and then departed.

In the evening I went again to the Ridotto; where, the very first person I encountered was Lady Grandison—Her reception of me was as cordial and kind as it had heretofore been in Ireland; she informed me that his Lordship would be at home that night, and if I could call on the following morning, he would no doubt be happy to see me. She then kindly asked after my mother and my aunt. I replied, that they were well, and added, in a lower tone, that I did not wonder my father was not included in her inquiries, as *my* journey was his certificate of health—for who thinks of money in sickness? Her Ladyship smiled, and then politely asked me to dance with her. She was a charming, lively, handsome woman, and like another Robin Goodfellow,—

“ Up and down, up and down,
I did lead her up and down.”

On the following morning I sallied forth on my way to Lord Grandison’s, trying “ to screw my courage to the sticking place,” and on the road thither, arguing and arranging in my mind all the *pros* and *cons* of my case. When I reached the chateau, I was conducted to the library, which I entered in full expectation of a private conference with Lord Grandison; but most disagreeably was I surprised, by finding there, in lieu of his Lordship, a French Viscount, an English lawyer, and a German notary. The former informed me that Lord Grandison was still at Aix-la-Chapelle; but if, as my letter stated, I came there to demand the payment of a large debt, I had better consult my *personal* safety, and instantly depart.

I asked them if this communication were made to me by the authority of Lord Graadison?

“Certainly not,” replied the lawyer; “for, since the receipt of your letter, we have neither seen nor heard from him, but common humanity for a young stranger—”

“Oui,” interrupted the Vicomte, “nous vous donnerons notre avis en pitié de votre pauvre *papa et maman*—retournez chez vous.”

Their officiousness and insolence so nettled me, that I threatened in my turn; and talking of adopting summary measures, they took me by the arm, and leading me to the large bay window of the apartment, which commanded an extensive view, they pointed to an immense, black, hideous, turreted, castellated building.

“*Voyez vous cela?*” cried the Vicomte.

“Coxcombs and contemners of those in authority have been known to die there in torments,” continued the attorney:

“*On n'y mange que du pain pourri*,” pursued the notary: “Ankle deep in water,” rejoined the attorney:

“*On l'appelle la Souricière*,” added the Vicomte:

“From which no young mouse ever yet escaped with life,” concluded the attorney.

Pride and spite, at the thought of being treated like a child by these three *terroristes*, so enraged me, that I could scarcely refrain from tears, and I turned from one to the other, like Tattle between Scandal and Angelica. At length, breaking from them, I rushed from the room exclaiming,

“*Morbleu! I came here tranquillement—mais, now,—Guerre ouverte!*”

Every step that removed me from the scene of battle, brought additional composure, and as the fresh air played on my face, I felt my courage “ooze in at my fingers’ ends.” On reaching my hotel, I requested to see the landlord, and asking him whether he knew an honest, active notary, who might present an account according to the forms of Germany, he replied, that it was fortunate for me I had made application to him; for the object of my search was a *rara avis* in that town. But, one of his most intimate acquaintance suited my description as if it had been made for him; for, (speaking legally) he must be honest, because he was poor, and he must be active, because he wanted money.

A messenger was sent for this gentleman, and fully conscious of the difficulties of my position, I anxiously awaited his coming—In an hour he arrived.

How great was my astonishment, when, on turning to receive him, I discovered the identical German notary I had just left. He did not seem less surprised than I, and never did the two Dromios gaze at each other with more burlesque amazement than we.

Soon, however, having somewhat recovered, I said I was distressed that I had given him the trouble of attendance for nothing; as being engaged by the defendant, I knew he would object to act for the plaintiff; and then, with a bow, I was preparing to show him the door, when, laying his hand on my arm, with a shrug of his shoulders, he cried in his broad German accent, “*Point du tout mon ami—il faut vivre—me voila prêt à vous servir.*”

Not having myself the slightest objection to employ one, who was already thoroughly versed in all the weak points of my adversary’s case, (and knowing if I kept a watchful eye on him, he had no possible means of cheating me,) I showed him my account, which he immediately signed and sealed. I then, in order to engage him hand and heart in my interest, gave him a louis; the feel and sight of which imparted to his lustreless eyes, an animation, one would have deemed them totally incapable of receiving.

“*Vraiment, he cried, “le sang de Monsieur, est d’une belle couleur, et je suis bon phlebotomiste, moi.”*

As he spoke, he drew from his pocket a half louis, and then added contemptuously, “*Voila, avec quoi le Vicomte m’a graissé la patte!*” Then attempting to imitate the form of a balance, and weighing my fee in one hand, and his French Lordship’s in the other, he exclaimed, “*Comme le louis, a le poids plus fort que le demi-louis, si Milord Reynolds l’emportera sur ce Monsieur Vicomte!**”

This mighty matter so far arranged, I took a ride to Stavelot and Coo, on a horse not much bigger than a large rat. The roads during the whole rout are little better than bogs in England. At every step the horse sinks to his knee, and, owing

* As the weight of the louis is heavier than that of the half louis, so my Lord Reynolds shall prevail over this Mr. Vicomte.

to his size, consequently, also to that of his rider. We crossed in several places, uninhabited and almost perpendicular mountains, and during the whole twenty miles. saw neither a horse nor human being. Here were sufficient craggy and gigantic rocks, romance, blackness, desolation and despair, to satiate the cravings of the most hungrily sentimental traveller.

Coo is a small village in a valley, whose sole attraction is its fine cascade, which falls in a large body from a huge rock, above sixty feet in perpendicular height. From the summit, the peasants throw their dogs, who slide and slip through this immense body of water, and emerge at the bottom in perfect safety. By the contributions of travellers, the few peasants who inhabit this lonely and desolate place are enabled to exist.

Stavelot is a small and rather neat town, governed by its own prince, who like the other petty princes of the empire, is only amenable to its feudal laws. His dominions are about as large, as the compact, ring-fenced estate of a wealthy English gentleman; but, in them, he is said to make and break laws according to his pleasure, condemn and pardon, levy taxes and men, declare war, and conclude peace. If I may have the presumption to venture a guess at his national revenue, I should say some fifteen or sixteen hundred pounds per annum. His standing army was, at that time, I believe, about twenty men; though, to speak the truth, I heard a native boast with pride, that, in case of an invasion, his Highness could absolutely raise an armed force of nearly *sixty* men!*

He has a neat little palace, guarded day and night by sentinels; a generalissimo, a lord chamberlain, and I know not how many other officers; while his wife has for her share of regalities, a princess, grand *sur-intendante* of her household, and two maids of honour. Courtiers, placemen, whigs and tories, belong also to this new “*Golbasto, Momaren, Evlame, Guidillo, Shefin, Mully, Ully, Gire*, most mighty Emperor of LILLIPUT, delight and terror of the universe, whose do-

* As a specimen of the efficient power and real humanity of this prince, I will add, that on the day I visited his *metropolis*, I saw a scaffold erected for an execution—But, like the men who had prepared all the engines, the buckets, and the water-pipes, and wanted nothing to complete their amusement, but—the *fire*; so on this occasion, the mob were compelled to disperse, wanting nothing, but—the *malefactor*, who had unexpectedly received his Highness’s pardon.

minions extend five thousand blustrings, (about twelve miles in circumference) Monarch of all Monarchs, pleasant as spring, comfortable as summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter," &c. &c.

In the evening, I went to their Vauxhall; where, instead of finding the Arcadia I expected, I found again my old friends, gambling and gallantry.

Many of the prettiest, and most fashionable women, seduced by the uncommon beauty of the weather, promenaded in an elegant, semi-transparent deshabille; and they laughed, leered, and lounged, on some happy or unhappy arm, with that languid, languishing air, half caused by heat, and half affected.

Here, the *liaisons* are almost as numerous as the population. A woman with the slightest pretensions to fashion, would be ashamed to appear in public without the reputation of having her *ami*; and a man, without a mistress, would be still more remarkable. I am sorry to add, that a wife for *une amie*, gives an eclat to both herself and her possessor, that make them look with inexpressible contempt on a simple spinster and her gallant: and thus, a woman of spirit takes a husband as she patronises a charity; from show, not from inclination.

While the intrigue lasts, the gallant is inseparable from his mistress; in the walks, in the drives, at the balls, the theatre and the concerts; in fact, he is more faithful to her than her shadow; for in the dark, *that* always leaves her, and there, the intrigant usually pursues her.

I used to dine at the table d'hôte; and we generally sat down about twelve or fourteen—Count Zenobio and Mr. Grattan were frequently of the number.

One day I heard there, that an English lady, the Countess of ——, who had been reproached by her husband with an intrigue, had replied to him, " What right have you to complain? I never was faithless to you, till I was honourably and lawfully ' in that state, in which ladies wish to be, who love their lords.' "

Having asked, for whom this said lady always wore mourning, Mr. Grattan replied, " For her reputation, to be sure, which, though lost *ten years ago*, dies a *new death* every day.

The conversation then turned on Tokay, and understanding that I had never tasted it, they offered to bet me the price of

a bottle, that I should not be able to drink a glass, if it were placed before me. I boldly accepted a wager of such apparently easy accomplishment; a bottle was brought, and I was preparing to help myself, when they forcibly took it from me, and drank the whole in a few seconds; leaving me excellently learned, not in the taste, but in the price, of Tokay. So much for Spa wit, which, ninety times out of a hundred, commenced, continued and concluded in a wager!

My dress* (owing to its strong contrast with the embroidered satin and velvet dresses of the continentals, and my extreme youth,) always rendered me an object of curiosity to the women. The acknowledged belle of the place was a Madame Grand—she was indeed a beautiful creature. Fine sparkling eyes, features truly regular, an exquisite complexion, and a figure like a Hebe's; but there was about her a self-consciousness of her beauty, a certain confident boldness, that were not exactly to my taste.

After the dance, she accidentally seated herself close to me on the same form, and a sort of ocular flirtation commenced. I felt confused, and her penetrating eyes did not restore my self-possession, though I struggled to assume it. At last, she inclined herself abruptly towards me, and said, (as I afterwards guessed,) “*Quelle heure est il?*”

She spoke, however, so low and rapidly, that at the time I could not exactly catch the words, and too polite, or too timid, to request a repetition, I awaited it in silence. Observing my confusion, and evidently imagining it to proceed from my ignorance of the language, with a vivacious expression in the eye, and an impatience in the manner, which I partly mistook, she pointed to my *watch-chain*, and—Oh, *Sterne!*—*FIELDING!*—*SMOLLETT!*—had I lived in those envied latitudinarian days, when ye were allowed freely to indulge your gay and sportive fancies, I might, though with far humbler power, have attempted to proceed with this facetious, innocent equivoque; but as it is, I stop—merely adding that I blushed and stole out of the room, without daring to seek on Madame Grand's face her opinion of my proceedings.

* Bright pea-green coat, with cut steel buttons, white waist-coat, buff silk breeches, curls like cannons, immensely large French silver buckles, and a little *chapeau bras*.

“Heu, quam difficile est sensum non prodere vultu.”

Blushing people always stoutly affirm, that blushes are the result of modesty. There are many kinds of blushes, yet I solemnly declare I know but few proceeding from modesty. There is the constitutional blush, the affrighted blush, and the recollective blush,—there is the blush of shame, agitation, self-application, exertion, and resentment; but seldom, I fear, is there one of modesty, though I humbly beg leave to disagree with those cynics who wholly deny its very existence.

Whilst returning, I met an Englishman, whom I had formerly known in London. I accompanied him to his lodgings; where, drawing forth an immense trunk, he opened it, and displayed a complete set of harness, which he had brought with him from England. The whole accoutrements, trappings and ornaments were of the most splendid quality and workmanship I had ever seen; and with surprise, I asked him what he intended to do with them?

“Not use them myself, you may believe me,” he replied; “I shall give them to a minister at Vienna, asking only one little favour in return—a license for a Faro-table there.”

“Why, these must have cost from 1500 to £2000?”

“Granted,” he replied; “but if they had cost £10,000, the permission I require would repay me.”

In all probability, the minister alluded to was of a similar opinion, and deeming the bribe too insufficient, or himself too honest to receive one, he refused his consent; and, as I afterwards heard, my sanguine speculator returned to try the virtue of his trappings in England.

Lady Grandison was, as usual, at the Ridotto, and there, for the first time, I encountered his Lordship; he received me so grandly and coldly, (that forgetting under existing circumstances he could not do otherwise,) I put *forth my quills* with increased vigour. Seating himself at the card-table, he evidently eyed me with some uneasiness: perceiving this, I advanced with great *sang froid*, and boldly spoke to him: he seemed astonished at my impudence; and well he might, for I have *since* been astonished at it myself! Nothing, I presume, but my *double* Westminster education—*School* and *Hall*—could have given me sufficient *bronze* for such cool proceedings. Having made an impression, I quitted the room.

At the hotel, after supper, Count Zenobio related to me an incident that he had witnessed here a few years ago; which had produced a most uncommon interest and effect. A short thin man, whom nobody knew but by sight, suddenly, became a constant attendant at the gaming tables. This man, during a whole fortnight, continued night after night, in the most extraordinary manner, to win enormous sums of the faro bankers, as well as the surrounding betters.

He wore spectacles, and appeared so short-sighted, that he was always obliged to touch the counters with his nose, before he could distinguish the card. Such was his luck, that whatever card he backed, was sure to win.

On the last night of his appearance in Spa, one of the gamesters, a young half-intoxicated Irishman, had lost an unusually heavy sum. His temper was quite gone, and he vituperated his lucky opponent, in a style that might have edified the most abusive fishwoman in Billingsgate. “D—— you, you old dog,” he cried, “and most particularly d—— your spectacles! By the powers, see, if I won’t try my luck myself in your cursed spectacles!” and snatching them from him, he put them on his own face. At first he could distinguish nothing, but on approaching the cards, within three inches of his nose, he discovered that the spectacles were strong magnifiers. His suspicion and curiosity, were immediately excited, and he turned to demand an explanation of the wearer; but he was gone. An examination then commenced, and the cause of this wonderful continuity of luck was speedily discovered.

The cards in Spa, are not bought of shop-keepers, as in England, but every autumn the proprietors of the gaming tables repair to the grand fair at Leipzig, and there purchase their stock for the year. Thither the spectacle gentleman had also hied, not as a *buyer*, but as a *seller* of cards; and at such reduced rate, and of such excellent quality, that all the purchasers resorted to him; and Spa and several other towns were literally stocked solely with his cards. At the back of each of these, concealed amongst the ornaments, and so small as to be unperceptible to the unassisted eye, was its number, with a particular variation to denote the suit. Then the rogue came to Spa disguised—with blackened hair, and spectacles; and there, as a *gentleman* gambler, would have broken all the banks in Spa,

but for the fury of the enraged Irishman. As it was, he decamped with several thousand pounds.

On the following evening, I again met Lord Grandison, "on the accustomed hill," and was commencing my old manœuvres, when he took me aside, and said to me, "Come, come, Frederick—it is high time this idle contest should terminate. I do not blame you for your zeal in your father's cause—but I blame you for acting as if I had personally provoked you, when you know I could not lend my name to such senseless mockery—Your whole conduct is literally worrying and annoying in the extreme, and I fairly tell you, in perfect good-humour, I wish you would leave Spa."

"Well!" was my reply in the same tone, "I am ready to meet your Lordship's wishes, if—"

"If what?" he rejoined—"Why, you are not going to dun again!"

"No, my Lord," I answered—"but if I return home, you see, quite empty handed, I shall look so foolish—come, now, in one word—a slight douceur of five hundred pounds, and your Lordship shall see at your chateau to-morrow morning, a beautiful P. P. C."

"Well—you are a cool, impudent fellow—but as I know you will keep your word—agreed"—and we parted for the night, on the best terms—each well pleased with his bargain.

In the morning, I called on his Lordship with my card—he received me with civility, and gave me a draught on his father-in-law, Lord Hertford, for five hundred pounds on account.

He then asked me when I should depart; I replied, the following morning by the Diligence. He said, with some hesitation, that my father must doubtlessly be anxious to know the result of my expedition; and that, therefore, he should conceive I had better return immediately. I soon saw the chief cause of this sudden affection for my father, and replied, that there was no conveyance in the afternoon, or I should have preferred it.

So desirous was his Lordship, (and probably with reason) to rid himself of me, that I had scarcely spoken, before the order was given to attach four horses to his cabriolet; and then turning to me, he said, that as I had been so obliging as to come so far to visit him, the least compensation he could make,

would be to return me to Liege in his own carriage. I made but a feeble resistance; so, both he and Lady Grandison shook me warmly by the hand, and wished me a hearty farewell. Seating myself in his Lordship's equipage, and buttoning my pocket over his five hundred pounds, I gave the word for departure to the postillions; and then, as I bade adieu to Spa and its black castle, and remembered that I was a mere solitary Westminster boy of seventeen, I could not refrain from triumphantly exclaiming with Clodio,

“Never fenc'd better in all my life!”

CHAPTER VI.

TOUR CONTINUED.

FRANCE AND PARIS.

“ Their condition, though it looks splendidly, yet when you handle it on all sides, it will prick your fingers.”

TAYLOR.

In justice to Lord Grandison, I must state the denouement of this transaction —By continuing to live abroad, and keeping his estates at nurse, he was in a very few years enabled to return to England, and, amongst other creditors, punctually satisfied my father.

Late in the evening I reached Liege, and drove to the principal inn; where, though only nine days previously, I had scarcely been able to obtain common attention, and the appellation of “ Monsieur,” I was now assisted to descend from my aristocratic equipage, by a dozen officious hands, and in the same instant proclaimed by as many voices, a real “ Milord Anglais!”

Here, however, terminated my pomp. The following morning his Lordship’s servants and carriage returned to Spa, and I departed in a humble Diligence for Brussels.

When I arrived there, I looked immediately for my bill of credit, which was drawn on a banker of that town. I searched my portmanteau, removed the contents, unfolded, shook, and refolded them; but no bill was there!—I emptied my pockets, and found a solitary louis and a few livres, but the *materiel* was gone. Here was a situation! In a foreign country, far from my home, and nearly *sans six sous*. I almost cried with rage, when I looked at Lord Grandison’s draught, and thought I might starve from want, with five hundred pounds in my pocket!

For a time I was completely confounded, and knew not what course to pursue. To return and seek assistance of Lord Grandison, was hopeless; retreating were "as tedious as go o'er."

At length, I remembered Alderman Lee, a friend of my father, resident in that very town. Just, however, as I was about to depart in search of him, the innkeeper came and demanded the remainder of my fare from Liege. To satisfy him I was obliged to part with my last louis; I gazed on it, pressed it, kissed it, and then with a suppressed sigh, abandoning it to Monsieur l'Aubergiste, exclaimed in the words of Maria Theresa, when forced to entrust her child to the custody of the faithful Hungarians: "There, my friend, to your fidelity, courage and constancy, I entrust this *image* of your king!"

After a short search, I had the good fortune to discover the Alderman. He professed great pleasure at my unexpected visit; but, when I stated that the object was to borrow a *large* sum, (for this is the surest method to obtain a *small* one) he changed his tone, and showed both anger and alarm.

But when, instead of my demanding a loan of two or three hundred pounds, as the old gentleman had expected, from the magnificence of my allusions, I entreated only ten pounds, he thought himself too fortunate, and immediately advanced them. I thanked him—promised speedily to repay him, and then departed, leaving him apparently much satisfied with the result of the transaction.

The moment I had got my money, instead of pursuing the route to Calais, I determined to see Paris; and without the slightest reflection, I went immediately and engaged a seat in the Paris Diligence, for which I paid two guineas. I simply thought, that as I had got five hundred pounds wholly by my own perseverance, I had a right to some little indemnification. Now, again, I revert to my diary.

September the 2nd. Brussels is an elegant town. La Place Royale, the Prince's Palace, the Grande Place, and the Metropolitan, are buildings that would do honour to any city in Europe. Went to the chapel, and there saw Prince Charles and his wife; as ugly a pair as ever sat in public.

The little park and less Vauxhall, are very neat, and the walks on the ramparts are pleasant. Wooden shoes amongst

the *bourgeoises* are the *ton* here. The Opera House is excellent, and the actresses are pretty and well made. Here was the first time I ever saw men and women kiss in public; the moment the opera was finished, and the company were on the point of departure, there was a general and noisy smacking throughout the whole house. All bad habits are contagious; I felt myself affected, wished to practise upon the lady next me, and got my ears boxed.

Afterwards I went to Vauxhall, where I saw two friends of my father—old and young Cole—at supper;—was much amused with a *bal paré*, in which figured all the frail fashion of Brussels.

Old Cole said that if I went to Paris I was mad: for Lord Cholmondeley had just been stopped at the gates, and obliged to return whence he came:—and that it was impossible for any Englishman to enter, since it was impossible for any Englishman to obtain a passport. “Wilful man will have his way;” I thanked him for his advice, determined to follow my own, wished him good night, and returned to my inn; where I supped with a party of English ladies and gentlemen, who had likewise been at the Opera; we had much talk about *kissing*—but mere *talk* upon my honour.

September the 3rd. Started at half-past three in the morning for Paris, without letters of recommendation, and with a very imperfect knowledge of the French language. However, as I expect my father’s friend Mr. Sayre will be at Paris, I shall not want an introduction to society, though I may want money; so I am obliged to play the miser with my small sum.

I had no dinner yesterday, and I intend to have none to-morrow; in fact, I only dine every alternate day. I deduct a sol from this, and a liard from that, and then I hoard them; and so vast is my hunger, I would eat them on my next non-dinner day, would it not be too expensive a meal.

Mons is a respectable old town in a bad situation. The country about it is flat, woody and barren. About eight in the evening, we arrived at Valenciennes;—the streets in general are dark, narrow, and winding, though picturesquely built in the gothic style. The town is thickly populated, and the pride of its numerous inhabitants, one of whom informed me with much gratification, that it was built by the Emperor Valenti-

nian the First, from whom it derived its name; a most *novel* fact.

At ten o'clock, we were joined by two gentlemanly officers, and got into another Dili, with six horses, and a large flambeau attached to it in lieu of lamps. As usual, I slept till we reached Cambray, where the gates being shut, I was awakened by a French "holla" for entrance, which we did not obtain for a full hour.

About ten o'clock in the morning we reached Peronne, a sombre place, called, however, "*Pucelle*," because it is asserted that it has never been captured. Judging by their manners and appearance, I should say, not one of the inhabitants can lay even as probable a claim to the appellation as their town.

While my companions were dining on *bouilli*, *ragout de rognons*, *oignons*, &c., I took the liberty of taking an English breakfast *a la Française*; that is, tea from leaves on a bough, probably cut from a sloe tree, which having previously flavoured the water, for the last English traveller, merely coloured mine after an hour's decoction.

September the 5th. Rose at three this morning. The Frenchmen kept on their night-caps and called me "Monsieur *Dejeuner*;" because I rallied them for dining when they ought to have breakfasted; dined again at nine o'clock in the morning, at Pont St. Mayence.—The next town is Chantilly; the Prince of Condé's Palace, too well known to bear description; the country is flat, but the different villages and seats make the environs very pleasant. Partridges and other game are as abundant as sparrows in the the temple.

At night we reached Paris, and the terrors arising from the want of a passport were now at their height; however, after a fearful pause of some minutes, to my unexpressible joy we passed the gates quietly;* and proceeded to Rue St. Denis, where I had my portmanteau broken open, and myself insulted. At length they suffered me to depart; so getting into a fiacre, I ordered the coachman to drive to the Hotel Vendôme, near the Louvre.

* To the obscurity of a Diligence, arriving from a German quarter, in all probability I was indebted for the facility of my entrance; since to a wealthy, and conspicuous equipage, Lord Cholmondeley might principally have owed his dismissal.

I walked into the court-yard with the air of a Marquis, and took a dignified turn around it; the master, mistress, and all the servants, following close at the heels of that then *rara avis*, an Englishman. After an examination, unable to pronounce me either *noble* or *roturier*, they made me that happy betwixt and between, a *monsieur*; so, as the house was seven stories high, and as the opinion in favour of my rank rather preponderated, they showed me into the third.

Left to myself, I gazed from my window on the surrounding scene, and thought what a sapient fellow I was to be in a city at war with our own, without a passport; and consequently, in perpetual danger of an immediate consignment to the Bastile, as a spy. However, I comforted myself with the idea that it was seeing life; so I hired a French valet, supped and went to bed.

September the 6th.—At a little after five I was awakened by a loud knocking at my door; in great terror I proceeded to open it; when instantly marched into the room an officer of the municipality, and two whiskered *gens d'armes*—O, thought I, old Cole is right; and I and my tour are both finished!

I had again entered my bed; when advancing close to me, the officer authoritatively demanded my passport, which in course not being able to produce, he exclaimed in a tone which gave me a universal palsy,

“*Sacrebleu!—qui êtes vous??*”—

So alarmed and confused was I, by this abrupt inquiry, and their fierce manners, that all my little French vanishing, I was compelled to resort to my pocket dictionary for assistance. So long was this searching operation protracted, (owing to my panic banishing the total recollection of one word, while I sought the succeeding) that quite infuriated, one of the *gens d'armes* pointed his bayonet; while the officer stamped, and vowed, that unless I could give him immediate proof that I was no spy, he would take me on the instant, to the Conciergerie—

This word roused all my faculties.

“*Je ne suis pas spy,*” I replied energetically; “*je suis Amerique!—non, stop, arretez,*” again recurring to my pocket ally! “*je suis, je suis Americain!*”—

“*Eh bien! mais le temoignage??*”

“*Quoi??*” again losing the scent.

“Le témoin—l’évidence?”

“*O l’évidence!*” I rejoined, with no more idea at first who should evidence to the truth of my assertion, than they had who required it—“*L’évidence—oui, oui, je comprends—wait un moment! l’évidence? ho! Docteur Franklin, Messieurs!*”

“*L’ambassadeur!*” cried the officer; “*cela fait autre chose donc;*” he added with altered tone and manner; and after a few more interrogatories, asked with less haughtiness, and answered with more assurance, they departed; granting me till six in the evening to procure from Doctor Franklin, a written document confirmatory of the truth of my statement.

Here was a dilemma! I knew personally no more of Doctor Franklin, than of Louis the Sixteenth himself, and I felt as if I had only gained a short respite, at the expense of a more severe punishment. Mr. Sayre might possibly have been able to assist me, but in what part of Paris was he to be found? However, with the Bastile, and racks, and tortures before my eyes, I started on an unsuccessful search for him. At last the clock striking twelve, and time fearfully pressing, as a last resource, as the forlorn hope, I determined to go to Passy, the place of Doctor Franklin’s residence, and a few miles from Paris; resolved to make a pathetic recital of my misfortunes, and then to throw myself on his generosity.

On my arrival, the occurrence that I most dreaded, really happened; I was refused admittance; my expostulations and intreaties were both equally fruitless: the gates remained shut, and my heart sank within me. I thought of home, and abandoning myself to my unlucky destiny, was about to return, almost resigning all hope of ever again seeing those I loved so dearly.

At this moment, those gates, so immovable for me, readily opened to give egress to a gentleman on horseback; as he passed, he gave some directions to the stubborn porter, who replied respectfully “*Oui, Monsieur le Secrétaire.*”

Knowing that I could not lose, and hoping I might profit, by this unintentional information, I impeded the advance of the man in power; and made so forcible an appeal, that the secretary, (who most fortunately for me, proved to be a really humane man,) interested himself in my griefs.

“He best can paint them, who shall feel them most.”

Among other questions, (to learn in what manner he could render me must effectual service) he inquired whether I knew any of Doctor Franklin's acquaintance in London. I mentioned my father; who I told him was the legal adviser of Wilkes and Sayre, and the friend of Horne Tooke and other patriots. With this information, the secretary returned to the house, leaving me in a state of suspense and agitation such as I had never before, and probably shall never again, experience. My new and kind friend, however, soon re-appeared, and joyously placed in my hands a written permission, signed by the ambassador, to remain at large in Paris for seven days, but no longer.

This, if not completely satisfactory, at any rate delayed the day of misfortune; so after expressing my most grateful thanks to my compassionate protector, I returned to the hotel, and ordered dinner. Before I had swallowed my second glass of Burgundy, the officer, and the *gens d'armes* entered, and demanded their answer. I showed them the permission; they bowed respectfully, and were preparing to depart; but, I was too elated to allow them, till they had drank bumper after bumper to the Doctor's health, and mine. At length they quitted me, lauding to the skies the liberality of the "*mag- nifique Monsieur Americain*"; and I finished the second bottle, singing—

" O liberty, thou goddess, heav'nly bright."

In the evening I went to the Opera. It was the first night of Beaumarchais' *Tarare*, and, owing to the immense popularity of the author, the crowd present was prodigious. That I succeeded in entering the theatre, was almost a miracle, though I gained but little profit by my entry; for, while I was contemplating with delight, the gorgeous and almost unparalleled magnificence of the properties, scenes and dresses, at the termination of the first act, (owing to the intense heat, the pressure, and the agitation I had previously encountered) I and the curtain dropped simultaneously, and I was carried out in a fainting fit. On the following morning, I heard that the new piece was not nearly so successful as either the *Barbier de Seville*, or the *Folle Journee*; indeed the reception was of such a doubtful nature, that 'twas said Beaumarchais himself

appeared on the stage, and addressed the audience, “in mitigation of judgment.”

During the day, fortunately discovering that Mr. Sayre lodged in the *Rue de Richelieu*, I waited on him, and he gave me a most kind and friendly reception. Though his stocks were then nearly as low as mine, he lent me five guineas: at the same time reminded me, that he owed my father nearly as many thousands.* I dined with him and Mrs. Sayre, to whom he was “rather married,” and in the evening we proceeded to the *Foire de St. Laurent*.

It was a gay scene, where there were booths, swings, various other amusements, and a small theatre; in which was represented the Capture of Gibraltar, by the Duc de Crillon, the Comte d'Artois, (who served under the former) and other French heroes. Mr. Sayre laughed, and said, that by this time, Lord Howe must have relieved the garrison, and captured or defeated all the “French Heroes;” and he added, also, that Lord Effingham had gallantly embarked, as a common volunteer on board his fleet.† There was a strong report on the previous day, that Gibraltar had surrendered, and they shouted for joy in the streets. The *canaille* hooted us, and an old *poissarde* cried, thrusting her pole-cat visage close to mine, “*Voila Messieurs Gibraltars—voila vous dam Anglais—Gibraltars is tekken!*”‡

* It should be mentioned, that Mr. Sayre, owing to his impeachment for high treason, his commitment to the Tower, his former wealth and influence as leading fashionable banker, his well known correspondence with Lord Chatham, and the remarkable handsomeness of his person, was, in spite of his reverses, even then, a most conspicuous personage.

† To show the different eye, with which the most honourable may regard their duties, and yet, act in strict concordance with their most scrupulous feelings, I will relate the examples of Lord Effingham and Cornwallis. When Lord Effingham was ordered to serve against the Americans, (for whose cause he was a most strenuous advocate,) he staunchly refused, and resigned his Colonelcy; conceiving that the injustice of the war superseded all claims to his obedience;—but, when Lord Cornwallis, his intimate friend, and who was as ardent as himself in defence of our oppressed tributaries, was requested to serve against them, he immediately acceded, conceiving that the wishes of his country, superseded all the objections of his own private feelings.

‡ The French, and the French court, have been, from time immemorial, addicted to errors of this nature; even in the present day, there are French-

As we returned, we went into a caricature shop. Here I was particularly struck by the evident discontent of the people; who, as if unable to give it a sufficient vent by whispering and printing, painted and engraved it. In one of these caricatures, fishes were seen flying in the air, while birds were drowning in the sea; a court of justice was inverted; the King, in his robes, stood attempting to water some drooping plants, but the water flew upwards. By his side, on its hinder legs, stood a large female wolf, to whom an immense pocket was attached, into which several courtiers of the Austrian faction, were seen rapidly pouring gold; while in the wolf's paw was a large flambeau, whose long flame descending perpendicularly, fired their wigs.

On the *wolf's head*, which bore a most ridiculous resemblance to the *Queen*, were immense plumes of feathers; alluding to the *feather mania*, with which Marie Antoinette had infected the court, at a period when they were only worn on the heads of horses. Never had fashion a greater rage; every week an additional, a handsomer, or a larger, feather was attached; until, at length, the Queen, her suit, and her horses, at a short distance from the beholder, were lost in one waving, undulating forest of feathers.

Mr. Sayre told me, this innovation was so odious to the *coiffeurs*, and the other good people of Paris, (lovers of powder, pomatum, and the *etiquette Louis Quatorze*) that, had it not been speedily abandoned, in all probability, there would have been a rebellion. It was on this occasion, Sir Charles Bunbury wrote the following epigram, with much success:—

“ Since to ape horses, sinks womankind,
Heaven forefend, they lovers should find!
For he that courts, and wins such fools,
Must raise a race of horrid mules!”

I called the following morning, with Mr. Sayre, on an old lady—a friend of his, for whom was the nominal visit, though

men, who write their positive convictions, that Buonaparte won the battle of Waterloo: and about one hundred and thirty years ago, Louis the Fourteenth, his court, and capital, were all engaged in rejoicings and illuminations, as allies of the unfortunate James the Second, for the defeat, and death, in Ireland, of William, Prince of Orange, and King of England, at the very moment that he was conqueror of the Bourbons and Stuarts, at the Boyne.

the real one was for me to see her daughter, an extremely pretty girl. Madame was in a sad panic. Her nephew was an officer in the French army serving in America, and bitten by the Yankee republicanism, had sent home a letter, so daringly expressing liberty and equality, and abhorrence of royalty and despotism, that the old lady feared it might bring the police about her ears, should it reach theirs. Mr. Sayre showed Madame how to avoid a possibility of discovery, by destroying the letter.*

My valet was one of the best of all good natured fellows. As he had a name most discordant, and of difficult remembrance, we mutually agreed, that I should call him *La Fleur*; thus affording me the opportunity of fancying myself either a Sterne, or a Glorieux.

On the Sunday, he came to me early in the morning, dressed in a cut velvet coat, well embroidered with tarnished silver; a white satin waistcoat, worked with flowers of different colours; black silk breeches, white silk stockings, and a *chapeau bras*. He bowed, and looked most smilingly, cheerfully, and significantly.

I stared at him with astonishment. I only allowed him the meagre and common wages of a *laquais de place*, and yet he was far better dressed than his master. He was young, tall, strait and good-looking; his curls and toupet, were all well powdered and arranged, and there was the sparkle of more than common intelligence and benevolence in his eye.

* When the Duc de Lauzun, since known, (during the revolution) as the Duc de Biron, brought to Paris the news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and his army, Mr. Sayre informed me, that on the second night after his arrival, he was at a party given by the Duc de Choiseul's sister, the Duchess of Grammont, where each individual lady successively saluted the Duc de Lauzun, as one of the chief heroes of liberty. They afterwards proceeded to express their democratic predilections, by their usual frivolous methods:—there were Franklin hats, Franklin bonnets, Franklin reticules, and some ladies even went so far, as to dismount their tops, and toupets, and crop their hair, *d la mode Americaine*. Perhaps, almost the only person who rightly saw the mischievous tendency of these apparent fooleries, was the Queen herself; but the Duc d'Aiguillon, and the Anti-Austrian party, had by that time so clipped her wings, that this amiable, but ill-fated lady, was compelled to confine her feelings and forebodings to the public manifestation of favour and preference for the few English then in Paris, to mark her dislike of Franklin, the Americans, and their principles.

He came to learn my arrangements for the day; but I was ashamed to give any menial command to a man of such gentlemanly and respectable appearance. Observing my examination, he smiled again, and with a low bow, hoped Monsieur thought his habit respectable?

“Why, *La Fleur*,” I cried, “you must have your whole years’ wages on your back?”

“*O que non Monsieur*,” he replied; adding, that he had purchased them of a *fripier*, and had given ten *livres* for the coat; that he had banished the unnatural polish that had seized on the most prominent parts of his breeches, with the assistance of a little French chalk, and now they looked *assez bien*; and that he had exchanged his old waistcoat and two francs, for the present one, with a Jew, who had received it in part of payment of a total of eighteen *livres*, from the third valet of the *Duc de Penthièvre*, “to whom, *on peut supposer*, it originally belonged:—and all this, for the credit of Monsieur.”

Such a tale, and so jovial a countenance, would have extracted two *livres* from the pocket of a miser; as for me, while I gazed on his grace’s waistcoat, I felt so ashamed of the smallness of the sum, that I almost expected it would be refused. However, to my great relief, he pocketed the affront, without the slightest manifestation of disapprobation, and then smiling significantly, exclaimed,

“*Monsieur, n’ira-t-il pas à Versailles?*”

“Wherfore should I go?” I replied.

“*Pourquoi!*” he repeated, with as much vivacity and astonishment, as he could express within the limits of the most marked respect; “*pourquoi? Tout le monde va à Versailles, tous les Dimanches;*”—and then, he gave so vivid and ardent a description of the gaiety and peculiarity of this hebdomadal excursion, that I saw the poor fellow’s very happiness, for at least six hours and a half, was dependent on my decision. So, principally for his gratification, but to tell the whole truth, partly for my own, I at length acceded to his proposal.

The means of conveyance then became a subject of discussion between us. We might have gone in the *coche* for twenty-five *sous*; or by water, as far as *Sèvre* for five *sous*; or, more respectably, in the *carrosse*, for four *livres* each. But, there was an attraction in the exhibition of *La Fleur*, on the foot board of a *fiacre*, and thereby a swagger over the *badauds* of

Paris, that was irresistible; so I commissioned him to hire a fiacre. After much haggling, (for the poor fellow was perhaps even more careful of my money than his own) he at length obtained one, to convey us to Versailles and back, for fifteen *livres* for the proprietor, and a present of three, for M. le Cocher.

It is a charming road, between trees and lamps, the whole distance. These lamps were lit on my return, and though of a bad construction, they give an amazing light. Incessantly, we overtook, or were overtaken by Parisians, going the same route, in every kind of vehicle, from the splendid and highly decorated *carrosse*, down to the jolting chariot, with its long and sharp axletree, of most convenient formation for mutual concussion and injury.

All were dressed after the fashion of *La Fleur*; few worse, and many better. They were, indeed, very different from the mob of England; particularly the women, who had a style and *ton* about them, that, in manners and in dress, would have placed them on a par with many of our gentry. They were all cheerful, laughing and grimacing; all recollection of the privations of the six days was obliterated, while they effected this *eclat* on the seventh.

It had threatened rain for some time, and before we had got six miles from Paris, it began to descend in large drops. I looked through the glass in the back of the *fiacre*, and never before nor since, have I seen a countenance more expressive of terror, than poor *La Fleur*'s at that moment. In his bosom, he had found shelter and seclusion for his fine *chapeau*; but, its forsaken occupant, his head of powder and pomatum, was left to encounter all the horrors of dilution and dissolution, in the pitiless storm; his double handkerchief, spread over his shoulders and waistcoat, had ensured their safety for a time; but how were the extremities of his dear, his darling coat, to be preserved?

Why was I to sit in comfortable indolence, while a better man than myself, was absolutely to be soaked into a state of solution? My conscience pricked me, so I stopped the coachman, and made *La Fleur* enter. His delight and respect are scarcely to be expressed. “*O, Monsieur, Monsieur*,” he cried, in an ecstasy of gratitude, “*ce n'est pas la conservation de ces haillons*,” pointing to his smart clothes; “*mais c'est la con-*

descendance de Monsieur, c'est l'honneur, Monsieur!" I thought he would have had a little fit.

At length, we reached Versailles, which is seated on a rising ground, in the middle of a champaign country. The grand avenue, which leads to the palace, divides the town into two parts, old and new Versailles. The former, contained many good hotels, an old convent, and church; the latter, a market-place, and a large square, and is altogether more regularly built.

The new palace is a magnificent building, and of prodigious size; the whole summit of which was, and is, I believe, decorated with statues, vases, and other ornaments, beautifully executed. Remarking to La Fleur, that this palace was far larger and more splendid than ours of St. James', he replied, with a naïveté that expressed a perfect conviction of my unavoidable concurrence in his assertion.

"Ah oui, Monsieur, les petits rois doivent avoir les petits palais; mais le grand roi—O mon Dieu!"

The gardens of the palace were beautiful, and the menagerie in the park, at that time, the finest in Europe. As we walked through the former, I was unexpectedly informed, by La Fleur, that if I were on the alert, I should now behold the grand spectacle, the main object of my visit to Paris; for that high mass being concluded, Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette were about to return from the chapel, to their apartments in the palace.

My indefatigable valet then proceeded to business, and having some slight acquaintance with one of the royal servants, giving him an *ecu*, he prevailed upon him to station me in a large ante-chamber; through which, the King and Queen were to pass in state.

Imagining, not only that La Fleur would remain, but that others would join me, I expected a tranquil scrutiny of the royal personages, from amidst the obscurity of a crowd; but, suddenly looking around, and discovering myself to be wholly alone, in a situation of unavoidable conspicuousness, violent and increasing nervous sensations seized on my mind.

Unable either to calm or re-assure myself, I ran to the door, determined on flight; when, at that very moment, hearing the approach of the King and his whole suite, I rushed back and slunk into a corner, abashed and confounded: for, independent

of constitutionally weak nerves, I had other grounds for agitation; first, as a foreigner, and that foreigner an Englishman; and secondly, on the score of etiquette, as boots, leather breeches, and plain, drab frock-coat did not too well accord with the costume of the most splendid court in Europe.

The door opened, and Louis the Sixteenth, Marie Antoinette, Monsieur, (the late King), and Mesdames, (the aunts of the King) entered the room, followed by a train of courtly personages, in most magnificent attire. Engaged in gay, cheerful conversation, they reached the centre, without observing me, and I began to hope I should escape altogether without notice. Suddenly, however, the King catching my eye, pointed me out to the Queen, and then the whole procession abruptly stopped.

I trembled, and could scarcely support myself, when a gracious smile from Marie Antoinette in some degree restored me; and the King also bestowing one, Monsieur, Mesdames, and the rest of the court in course, followed their examples. The King, then saluting me with a most affable inclination of his head, passed on; while the accordant train, again receiving the *ton* from their sovereign, overwhelmed me with their nods, and protecting graciousness: then, as the whole court walked out amused, at one door, I more than equally gratified, departed at the other.

The Queen was then in her twenty-seventh year; certainly the most pleasing and commanding beauty I had ever seen. The King was rather above the common stature, of dignified deportment, and with a countenance expressive of the utmost benevolence. Of the other individuals of the court, I have not the slightest recollection—I do not think I even saw them, so engrossed was my attention by the two principals of the spectacle.

Mr. Sayre informed me, that a few years previously to this period, he had seen the royal family of France, dine in public. The crowd of idolaters, who flocked to pay their court to the youthful and fascinating daughter of Maria Theresa, was so great, that the saloon became almost insupportable from the heat: the Queen was nearly fainting, and those who attempted, being unable to open the windows, Louis the Sixteenth ordered them to be broken, and instantly, hundreds of panes of the most costly plate glass, were shattered into fragments, in the

eagerness of giving air to a Queen, whose breath that very people afterwards terminated, with frantic gratification, on a scaffold!*

I returned to Paris with gratified sensations. I had been noticed by the Grand Monarque, la belle Reine, and the chief of the court of France; but, fortunately, though young, I was not conceited. I presume the bladder of my vanity was pricked at Westminster, for I neither said, nor thought with Falstaff,

“I shall be sent for in private.”

Never had unfortunate princess a more difficult part to play, than Marie Antoinette. The party, that after so much violent opposition, at length succeeded in placing her on that station of trial and peril, a throne, were vanquished almost before she attained it; leaving her the unsupported victim of the enemies they had themselves excited. At the age of nineteen, Queen in a foreign court, surrounded by hostile interests, but not one friend or protector, without even the confidence of her husband, and advised by an erring and prejudiced priest, (to

* An action of gallantry once offered to majesty, which reduces the above almost below the level of common courtesy, was that I once heard from an old American gentleman, and which is too appropriate to the present context, to be omitted here. It related to an officer of the Household of an Indian Queen, who, superior to the *gêne* and restraints of our straight-laced European decorum, instead of concealing the graces of nature under a bathing-dress, used, constantly in conjunction with her blackest and most favourite nymphs of honour, (when at a distance from the shore most convenient for the observations of her loving subjects on it,) to plunge into the sea, out of a twelve-oared barge, filled with all the male fashion and beauty of the court. One day, when, like a porpoise, she had sufficiently spouted, tossed, and tumbled, she was swimming towards her boat, when a hungry shark appeared in rapid chace after this luxurious banquet of imperial beauty. The queen shrieked, and exerted her utmost speed; her attendants roared, the shark pursued, gained way, and was about to spring; but, at that very moment, when her preservation appeared beyond the reach of human power, with an address, and a presence of mind not to be sufficiently extolled, the above-mentioned officer cast a *little page*, wand, dress of state and all, between the queen and the enemy. The *morpéau* was finished in a moment, but *that* moment saved her majesty. The gallant officer was made Grand Chamberlain, and to gratify the manes of the poor little page, his brother was made a very great man, and exempted from attending the queen on her days of bathing.

whom, from her earliest infancy, she had been taught to pay an unlimited deference,) where is the woman that would not have erred?

But the errors of Marie Antoinette, were of the head, not of the heart; a word or look, inappropriately spoken or placed, were so many crimes in this scandalizing court. A friend of Sayre, showed me a copy of a most libellous and infamous song, that before she was eighteen, was circulated *sub rosa*, containing a list of her lovers, which beginning with the Duc de Choiseul, included even that little dwarf the Duc de Fronsac. Similar attacks pursued her through the whole of her unfortunate career, and, frivolous as they may appear, conjoined with her dislike of magnificent slavery, in a court and nation of etiquette; conducted, perhaps, more essentially to her fatal termination, than any other causes.

But, to my tale again. The two following days, I walked about the city, with my ever assiduous La Fleur; but was so pressed for time, that in my eagerness to see every thing, in fact I saw nothing. Having fairly galloped through the Louvre, the Tuilleries, the Palais Royal, the Bourbon Palace, the Hospital of Invalids, and Notre Dame, I began to feel that "my hour was almost come."

Profiting by my past imprudence, and aided by Sayre, I passed the fifth and sixth days, in attempting to procure a passport for England—in vain. Not daring again to apply to Dr. Franklin, since his secretary had informed me positively to expect no further assistance in that quarter, there was but one chance of escape; namely, the discovery of some American gentleman, who having a passport for himself and servants, would allow me to rank among the latter.

Certainly, I might have reached England, *via* Brussels, without much difficulty; but, I had not sufficient money to encounter the additional expenses of that prolonged route. Thus, my troubles and perplexities only continued to increase, till the evening of the seventh day, when Sayre joyfully informed me that Mr. Watkins, an American gentleman, who had a passport for himself and servant, would cheerfully accommodate me. I waited immediately on him, was most cordially received, and *hired* as his valet, without the accustomed inquiry as to character;—perhaps, luckily for myself.

At ten, the same night, after taking leave of my kind friend

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Mr. Sayre and poor La Fleur, who literally, was considerably affected by the circumstances under which we parted, in a borrowed great coat of Mr. Watkins, I took my station behind his carriage. Having passed the *barrier*, I was again a gentleman, and seated by his side, travelled on merrily to Calais.

But here, much to my mortification, owing to his too retentive memory, I was discovered by Dessein. However, he most honourably keep the secret; and the packet sailing the same day, I hastily resumed my livery, and tremblingly proceeded to the Quay. By following my master, and carrying his small trunks, when he presented his passport, I passed the ordeal in triumph, and in less than three hours, once more trod on native ground. Then I felt the true pleasure of travelling,—the return to *home*, which is ever (to those who will speak truth,) made ten times more valuable by temporary loss.

Mr. Watkins, like the majority of his countrymen, at that time had the greatest possible dread of highwaymen; such predators being rarely, if ever, encountered in America. To guard, therefore, against danger, he took a place in the stage for London; I taking another, but only to Dartford; my purse being too low to allow me the expense of even one additional mile, and my pride too high to permit me to apply for pecuniary assistance to my fellow traveller.

On the road, we met with no adventures, and were not robbed by a single highwayman, though Mr. Watkins thought we were by innkeepers. Arriving at Dartford in the evening, we shook hands and parted; he towards London, and I towards Southbarrow.

After walking six miles in a drizzling rain, cold and cheerless, hungry and thirsty, it became quite dark before I reached Chislehurst Common,—nothing but the thought of dear home, yielding relief,—when, suddenly, a carriage with lighted lamps overtook me. It was my father's—honest old Harper, the coachman, hailed me, jumped, or rather tumbled down, opened the door, and in another instant I found myself clasped in my father's arms.

After a short pause, he exclaimed,

“ Well, Fred, what have you done?”

“ I have spent twenty five pounds, Sir, and brought home with me a bill for five hundred, and send any body next

Spring to Spa, and that sum will be doubled." I was again in his arms.

On arriving at Southbarrow, I met a reception from my mother, aunt and old nurse Morgan, which would have amply compensated for ten times the number of difficulties I had experienced. It almost made me wish to travel again, though not exactly that night; so I retired to my old tent bed, and there sinking into a profound sleep, nothing remains to be added to my Tour through France, Flanders, and Germany, but,

FINIS.

CHAPTER VII.

FOLLY AS IT FLIES.

“As for you, honest souls, who were never admitted into the Temple of Wisdom, nor ever visited the Sanctuaries of Wit, gather yourselves together from all parts, and hearken to what I am about to utter. But for you, men of science, who weigh sense, scan syllables, and measure sounds,—Away hence! stand aloof!”

LORD SHAPESBURY.

Soon after my arrival from France, my father received an invitation from my travelling companion Mr. Watkins, to dine with him at his uncle’s house in the city. I also was invited, and as we read on the card, that we were to meet amongst others, the celebrated Dr. Franklin, who had suddenly arrived in England, on a pacific mission, my father felt peculiarly gratified by the idea of once more shaking hands with the venerable patriot.

The important day being arrived, my father, as he descended from his carriage, eagerly demanded whether Doctor Franklin had arrived? The servant replied in the affirmative, and then added, that he was at that moment in the drawing-room.

“Now, Fred,” my father exclaimed, “you’ll see what a reception I shall have.” Up stairs he ran, and I, post haste, after him. On entering the room, we beheld the Doctor seated at a table near the fire, with a large folio volume lying open before him. His dress, considering the time and the occasion, appeared to us rather disrespectful; a large, wrapping, morning gown, slippers, nightcap and spectacles.

However, this surprise was nothing to that which followed; for, when my father, with much self-satisfaction, exclaimed, “How do you do, Doctor?” he made not the slightest reply. “Probably, you do not recollect me,” rejoined my father after a considerable pause, “my name is Reynolds.” Again, neither

answer nor action. My father checked and disappointed, strutted towards the window, expressing in rather an alto tone, his unlimited disapprobation of American manners.

I endeavoured to exculpate the Doctor by pointing out to my father, how intent he was on his book; though, at the same time, I could not help wondering that he could see to read on a misty October evening solely by the light of the fire. Yet the chief cause of my surprise was, that, during the whole time we had been in the room, I had never seen him turn over a single leaf; but such was my respect, I was afraid of approaching to a close inspection, lest I should give offence.

More visitors entered, and were received with the same contemptuous silence. All were whispering and complaining together, when Mr. Watkins entered, and bowed respectfully to the Doctor, advanced towards us, and shaking us by the hands, loudly expressed his hopes that we had found his excellency entertaining—"Not at all," was the general reply, though in a low tone—"Indeed!" exclaimed our host with assumed surprise; "then I must try if I can not make him entertaining," and rapidly approaching him, to our sudden dismay, he seized his nightcap, threw it up to the ceiling, knocked his spectacles from his nose, boxed his ears, and then, to prove that even dull Yankies can impose on credulous cockneys, undid his garment, and discovered a "*Man of War.*"

"Yesterday, Gentlemen," said Mr. Watkins, I purchased this curious and extraordinary resemblance of our illustrious friend, of Mrs. Wright, of Cockspur-street, for fifty guineas; and I believe, gentlemen, you will all agree with me, that I may venture to assert with Charles in the School for Scandal, 'This is the first time the Doctor was ever bought or sold.'

Some laughed, some pouted, particularly my father; however, all was soon forgotten, and forgiven; Mr. Watkins at last wholly re-establishing the general good humour, by laughingly saying, "Having heard that a London dinner was nothing without a lion, I thought it better to offer you a *waxen* one, than no lion at all.

I must now recur to an event of a very different nature. During the month of March, in the ensuing year, 1783, a disastrous duel occurred between Captain Riddell of the Horse Grenadiers and Captain Cunningham of the Scotch Greys, which, owing to its peculiar circumstances, excited the great-

est interest, and the account of which I afterwards received from Riddell's second, Topham

The quarrel had been of long duration, but owing to their separation for some years, their friends hoped that it had, at length, naturally died away. Unfortunately, however, encountering each other one morning at their agent's, Mr. Christie, high words ensued, and on the evening of that same day, Captain Cunningham wrote, demanding satisfaction.

The note arriving while the wafer was yet wet, at the house of the Captain's father, Sir James Riddell, he not observing the superscription, and conceiving it to be intended for himself, opened it.—Such, however, was the high honour of this Roman Baronet, that though thus suddenly placed in possession of the fact of his son's intended rencontre, instead of interfering to prevent it, he calmly closed the letter, and restamped the wafer; acting no further on his knowledge of its contents, than to procure the secret attendance of two surgeons, of first rate abilities.

The meeting took place on the appointed day; Riddell, attended by Captain Topham; and Cunningham, by his cousin, Captain Cunningham. Eight paces were measured by the seconds, and they tossed up for the first fire, which being won by Riddell, he fired and shot his antagonist.

The moment Captain Cunningham received the wound, he staggered but did not fall. He opened his waistcoat, and appeared to be mortally wounded. All this time, Captain Riddell remained on his ground, when after a pause of about two minutes, Captain Cunningham declared that he would not be removed till he had fired. Cunningham then presented his pistol, and shot Captain Riddell in the groin. He immediately fell, and was carried to Captain Topham's house in Bryan-stone-street; where on the following day, he died.

Captain Cunningham, after a long and dangerous illness, recovering, voluntarily surrendered himself to the judgment of the law: he was tried and acquitted.

About this period, another melancholy domestic event occurred.

My brother Robert, (who had for some time been a student at Saint John's College, Oxford, and had taken orders) frequently performed duty at Eltham and Hayes, with so much success, that there was not only a prospect of his becoming a

very popular preacher, but, from my father's interest and connection, a prosperous clergyman.

If a clear, flexible voice, mild engaging manners, and a handsome person, could insure their owner the hearts of both hearers and beholders, Robert was that man—but, alas, it was decreed he should not long derive benefit from these advantages!

One afternoon in the month of April of this year, riding on the Witney road, he stopped at Botley, about a mile from Oxford, and walked his horse into a pond, for the purpose of giving him drink. A woman at a farm-house adjoining, called from her window, in the hope of warning him of the depth of the water, but at that very moment, both my brother and the horse disappeared. The latter, however, soon again rose to the surface, and after much difficulty, at length succeeded in reaching the shore. He then galloped off violently towards Oxford; but my poor brother rose no more!—

We were informed of this melancholy circumstance the following morning, by a letter from a fellow collegian with my brother, the present Mr. Serjeant Sellon. As may be supposed, the whole family was thrown into the deepest affliction; particularly my affectionate mother, who did not recover the shock for many years.

I can not conclude this brief account, without adding that not only on this occasion, but on many others, I have been indebted to the kindness and friendship of Mr. Serjeant Sellon. He arranged the funeral, and with other fellow collegians, (amongst whom was Mr. Fonblanque, the King's Counsel,) followed their lamented friend to the grave.

Though I had not quite passed the days of boyhood, when this favourite brother's existence was thus suddenly and fatally terminated, and though Gray, in his Eton College Ode, speaks of “the tear forgot as soon as shed,” yet can I remember that this, my first serious loss, caused me, perhaps, more lasting and heartfelt grief than in colder manhood I have ever experienced.

When I recall the sufferings of this period, and think of my present feelings, I must suspect that my philosophy, like that of many others, is of that species mentioned by Rochefoucault, which, though always triumphed over by present misfortunes, always *triumphs over* past and future misfortunes—for I now

feel myself quite capable of an immediate recurrence to less cheerless subjects.

I believe at the present period, it is pretty generally acknowledged that there is not space in John Bull's head for more than one object at a time; and whether that object be a learned man or a learned pig, a great patriot or a little conjuror, while the rage lasts, we bid *bon soir* to all other aspirants to our notice and admiration. This very year, then, there appeared a star of such magnitude, that every other "hid its diminished head.

I allude to the *balloon* mania.

The origin of this ingenious invention is too well known for me to state more than that, after Stephen and Joseph Montgolfier, paper manufacturers at Annonay, near Lyons, had distinguished themselves by exhibiting the first of these aërostatic machines, the philosophers of Paris, discovering that hydrogen gas was of a far less specific gravity than the rarefied air of Montgolfier, Messrs. Roberts were employed to construct a new machine, which, after many difficulties, on the 27th of August, 1783, ascended from the *Champ de Mars*, before a prodigious concourse, to the height of above three thousand feet.

I can not refrain from adding, that poor Pilatre de Rosier (who, in an aërostatic attempt to cross from Boulogne to Dover, lost his life) was the first adventurer in aerial navigation. On the 15th of October, 1783, the balloon being inflated under the direction of M. M. Montgolfier, de Rosier with a philosophical intrepidity that will ever be recorded with applause in the history of aërostation, placed himself in the car, and to the astonishment of nearly all Paris, ascended to the height of ninety feet, and at that elevation, contrived to remain stationary, by repeatedly throwing straw on the fire. Then gradually and gently descending, this intrepid chemist alighted and publicly proclaimed to the spectators, that he had not experienced the slightest inconvenience.

Soon afterwards M. M. Roberts made a successful voyage in a balloon inflated with hydrogen gas.

The reader may conceive the astonishment that the Londoners testified, on receiving the accounts of these occurrences. Indeed, all England was wild to witness this novel and extraordinary exhibition. But, though each reproached the other with his want of spirit and enterprise, none could be found sufficiently bold to commence operations.

At length, in the spring of 1784, Mr. George Biggin, afterwards known by the name of Coffee Biggin, an ingenious chemist and a most gentlemanly man, employed Lunardi to construct him a balloon; in which he intended both should ascend, in the following September.

In the interim, every person, more or less, became ærostatistically curious. For myself, owing to my intimacy with Mr. Biggin, I had considerably the start in this mania; and whilst the secret still remained almost wholly unknown, I could make small "Montgolfiers," as the paper balloons were then termed. But, whether I made them to any good end, the following little anecdote will show.

Lord Effingham giving a dinner party at the Ship at Greenwich, invited my father and me. Balloons were then so much in their infancy, that, guessing his Lordship and the rest of the party had never seen one, I brought a small Montgolfier with me, in the hope of rendering myself conspicuous. His Lordship, delighted with the intelligence, requested that it might be brought into the room. I obeyed, and then, for the *first time*, he, his friends, the landlord, and the waiters, beheld the *wonderful machine*.

The rumour spread through the town, and expectation being instantly excited to its utmost pitch, the whole shore and river were covered with spectators. My father, insisting that the best method of gratifying public curiosity, was to effect the ascent from the middle of the river, he, Lord Effingham and I, entered a wherry.

Perhaps, it will now be thought that I exaggerate, when I state, that as we glided along with the balloon, and "all appurtenances and means to boot," we were loudly, and universally cheered, and huzzaed; but such was the fact.

At length, the awful moment arrived, and whilst the *sun* of our little world became more and more the object of universal admiration and attention, I proceeded to ignite the spirits of wine and tow. The balloon filled—the multitude shouted—I vapoured and attitudinized—and then, making sure of a superb ascent, I let go my hold.

But, to my horror and disgrace, not a foot, not an inch, nor the eighth of an inch, would the obstinate beast ascend. Groans, cries and hisses, immediately resounded around. Lord Effingham, knowing by experience the savage nature

of a disappointed mob, and beginning to grow both alarmed and angry, repeatedly called me “a little chemical coxcomb;” while I, in the most terrible panic, was attempting to effect the ascent of the balloon, as if my life depended on the result. Succeeding at last, upwards went the object of curiosity, amidst an universal astonishment and silence, which continued until it had vanished from our sight.

On reaching the shore, I swaggered in all the pride of success, and returning to the dinner table, the whole party *injured* their *own* healths by *toasting mine*. In about an hour, however, the scene was again changed, for the landlord entering the room, told us with a long face, that the balloon had fallen in a stack-yard, about half a mile distant, and that the amazed and terrified farmer, supposing it a falling meteor, or ball of fire, had instantly taken flight, leaving M. Montgolfier, in flaming possession of the property.

The result may be conceived; the farmer soon discovered his error, and arriving at our quarters, called us all incendiaries, &c.; and at last, was only appeased by the payment of compensation money to the amount of twenty pounds. So that we all went home, exclaiming with Lord Trinket, “We have cut a mighty ridiculous figure here, ‘pon honour.”

My father had at this period, for his client, a rich German nobleman, (Baron Palnitz, or Pilnitz, I can not distinctly recollect which) a well-bred and enlightened man; but fashion in every thing bearing sovereign sway, soon after Lunardi’s successful ascent, the Baron was seized with the prevailing mania, to an extent almost beyond credibility.

Being rich, he soon became the rallying point for all ærostatic adventurers. Amongst others, a French Count spun his cobwebs around him, and so completely caught him, that, with astonishment, we heard the Baron gravely relate that he had given orders for the construction of an aerial machine, sufficiently large to contain stores, provisions, beds, and every other accommodation for passengers; and that, though balloons in the hands of Charles, Pilatre de Rosier, Lunardi, &c. had been useless toys, the French Count having discovered the means of creating an impelling power, by the aid of an artificial wind counteracting the effects of the natural wind, *their* balloon would be seen sailing like a ship, and with a facility

of management, and a rapidity, that would soon manifest the superiority of the aerial, over the common navigation.

As the work proceeded, the Baron speedily grew so sanguine as to his ultimate success, that, (liberally wishing to secure the profits of the discovery to the French projector) he requested my father to apply for a patent.

The Attorney General, Sir Pepper Arden, naturally surprised at this extraordinary application, desired an interview, and my father being out of town, I was compelled to conduct the Baron to the Attorney General's chambers in Portugal-street, when the following curious conversation ensued.

“ So, young gentleman, where is your father?”

“ He is out of town, Sir.”

“ Indeed! and pray what does this absurd application mean?”

“ Méan, Sir?” I repeated in surprise; “ it means, Sir, that by artificial wind counteracting the effects of the natural wind, we can direct balloons—”

“ And what then?”

“ What then, Sir?”

“ Aye, and what then, Sir?”

“ Why, Sir,” I replied, with great consequence and volatility, “ we shall not only raise botany to the highest pitch of perfection, by transplanting fresh roots, and fruits from one country to another; we shall not only *raise the sieges of garrisons*, by introducing armed men and provisions at our pleasure, but we shall *discover the North West passage*, and—”

“ Aye,” interrupted the Attorney General, scarcely able to suppress his laughter, “ and in your mighty wisdoms, I suppose, not only defraud the customs and excise, but annihilate the revenue resulting from the post-office, &c. Pooh, nonsense!—artificial wind!”—(laughing heartily)—“ stuff—who is to supply the wind?—your client there?”

The Baron seeing the Attorney General, as he conceived delighted, smiling, said—

“ *L'avocat general, que dit-il Monsieur Frederick?*”

I replied in my usual bad French, made worse by confusion—

“ *Il demande Baron, si vous êtes le personne qui fait le vent flatulen?*”

“ *Diable!* exclaimed the Baron.

The Attorney General then rose, bowed, and coolly desired

me to tell my father, that the Baron's was less a case for a lawyer than a physician.

In consequence of this interview, and of some other unexpected disappointments, after a short interval, the eyes of our enterprising Baron were opened; and both he and my father, feeling the justice of Sir Pepper Arden's irony, instead of bursting in the air, the bubble burst on *terra firma*.

The next mania of any note was the dog mania.

A subordinate but enterprising actor, of the name of Costello, collected, at the great fairs of Frankfort and Leipsic, a complete company of canine performers, and arriving with them in England, Wroughton, then manager of Sadler's Well, engaged him and his wonderful troop. They were fourteen in all, and unlike those straggling dancing dogs still occasionally seen in the streets, they all acted respondently and conjointly, with a truth that appeared almost the effect of reason. The *star*, the real star of the company, was an actor named Moustache, and the piece produced, as a vehicle for their first appearance, was called the "Deserter."

As formerly, all London flocked to Goodman's Fields to see Garrick, so now the rage was to visit Spa Fields, to see Moustache and his coadjutors. The night I was first present at this performance, Sadler's Wells, in point of fashion, resembled the Opera House on a Saturday night, during the height of the season; princes, peers, puppies and pickpockets, all crowding to see what Jack Churchill, with his accustomed propensity to punning, used to term, the illustrious dog-stars.

On this evening the late Duke of Gloucester was also present. Wroughton, who at that time frequently played at Drury Lane the parts of *Lear*, *Evander*, and other aged characters, was now, as manager of Sadler's Wells, dressed in court costume, and looking his real age, about thirty-five, lighted his Royal Highness to his box.

"Eh? how?" exclaimed the Duke, "who, what are you?"

"My name is Wroughton, please your Royal Highness."

"Oh! what," rejoined the Duke, "son of *old* Wroughton of Drury Lane?"

Wroughton, who told me of this whimsical error, said, that at first he knew not whether to receive it as an affront, or as a compliment; however, affecting to consider it as the latter, he paid the Duke his acknowledgments for unconsciously avow-

ing that his assumption of old age was not distinguishable from the reality.

The curtain shortly afterwards rose. I will pass over the performance till the last scene, merely remarking, that the actors of *Simpkin*, *Skirmish*, and *Louisa* were so well dressed, and so much in earnest, that, in a slight degree, they actually preserved the interest of the story, and the illusion of the scene. But Moustache, as the *Deserter!* I see him now in his little uniform, military boots, with smart musket and helmet, cheering and inspiring his fellow soldiers, to follow him up scaling ladders, and storm the fort. The roars, barking, and confusion which resulted from this attack, may be better imagined than described.

At the moment when the gallant assailants seemed secure of victory, a retreat was sounded, and Moustache and his adherents were seen receding from the repulse, rushing down the ladders, and then staggering towards the lamps, in a state of panic and dismay.

How was this grand military manœuvre so well managed? probably asks the reader. I will tell him—These great performers having had no food since breakfast, and knowing that a fine, *hot supper*, unseen by the audience, was placed for them at the top of the fort, they naturally speeded towards it, all hope and exultation; when, just as they were about to commence operations, Costello, and his assistants commenced theirs, and by the smacking of whips, and other threats, drove the terrified combatants back in disgrace. This brings to my recollection what old Astley once whimsically said to the late Mr. Harris:—

“ Why do my performers act so much better than yours? Because mine know if they don’t indeed work like horses, I give them *no corn*—whereas, if your performers do, or do not, walk over the course, they have their *prog* just the same.”

Wroughton frequently told me that he cleared upwards of seven thousand pounds, by these four legged *Rosciis*; and the following year, the proprietors of the Opera House, gained a still larger sum by Vestris.*

“ Immortal chief! who on one leg could do,
What erst no mortal could achieve on two!”

* This was the son of the original “ *Dieu de la danse*,”

It may be truly said, there is always *life* about a theatre, and if beings of human form and talents, will not satisfy the cormorant appetite of the public, and allow the manager to pay his necessarily heavy nightly expenditure, *he* must indeed be a simpleton, who will not *empty every menagerie*, foreign and native, rather than incur ruin, by allowing an *emptiness* in his own treasury. Certain pedants, however, demand the classical, legitimate drama. Now, I ask *what and where* is it?

Surely, they can not allude to our immortal bard, who soared far above all the trammels of insipid regularity. So did Dryden, Beaumont and Fletcher, Congreve, and Vanbrugh. Are Cibber, Sir Richard Steel, Voltaire, and Racine, the real *legitimates*? Are we to see plots and counterplots, poised, measured, and calculated with a geometrical nicety, and hear French soliloquizing *problems* uttered in a rant as passionately warm, as the matter is chillingly cold? I only know if “The Careless Husband,” “The Conscious Lovers,” “The Distressed Mother,” or “Zara,” be the standard, these pedantic gentlemen ought to pay handsomely to see them, for it appears that nobody else will.

“And those who live to please, must please, to live.”

In truth, a manager’s is a hard life; theatrically speaking, a *bad part*; rather the *Laertes* than the *Hamlet* of the drama; for, do all he can to conciliate behind or before the curtain, he seldom gets applause. Why then do so many court the office, particularly, as so many have failed in it? Because, as the elder Colman said, in his pamphlet, written concerning his quarrel with the late Messrs. Harris and Rutherford,

“Managing a theatre is like stirring a fire, which every man thinks he can do better than another. Now, *I stir a fire* better than any man in England!”

On the 30th of September, 1783, I was present when Mr. Kemble made his first appearance on a London stage, in the character of Hamlet. Avowing myself to be one of those, who instead of being “*nothing if not critical*,” know that I am *nothing if critical*, I will not trouble my readers with useless observations, but refer them to his classical biographer, Boaden; from whom they will receive a description far superior to any I could offer. However, I shall hereafter have fre-

quent occasion to speak of other performances of this truly great actor.

This year, not being particularly *flush*, presents in the prosecution of my *amourettes*, having consumed the greater part of my money, I could not afford to attend the theatres so frequently as I wished. From Mr. Harris, as also from my friend and schoolfellow Colman, and from Dive, and others, I could have occasionally procured an *ORDER*, or, to use a less plebeian appellation, an *admission*.

But my family, like many other families at that time, voting an *order* to be a sort of eleemosynary mendicant contribution, and completely *infra dig.*, pride compelled me to decline the acceptance of one. It may now appear strange, though it is perfectly true, that, in those days, many most respectable individuals, who, from economical motives, declined paying to the boxes, would rather *mob it*, as they expressed themselves, in the gallery, than accept admission to the best places, at no other expense than, perhaps, a cold look from the donor, and a contemptuous one from the check deliverer.

How different is the case now, and how ruinous is the present system! If the manager can not fill his house by natural means, he immediately has recourse to hot-house measures, and *forces* one!—as if languor would not ensue as much after the use of stimuli in theatricals, as of stimuli in physic. But, “*SQUEEZE*,” is now the watchword of every assembly, fashionable, dramatical or political, throughout the kingdom.

As the prostitution, however, of this kind of accommodation paper, like the paper kite in commercial concerns, so frequently recoils, had not a manager better boldly look a few bad houses in the face, than by patching up appearances, continue to play nightly to *overflowing* audiences and to an empty treasury.

For the exemplification of my theory, I must again recur to *self*; the very nature of my work compels me to be personal, perhaps even to appear egotistical—so, I beg pardon, but must continue. I have had nearly fifty dramatic pieces performed, and for more than half my theatrical career, have had an unlimited power of writing orders. As during the long run of some of my comedies, I suppose, at least five hundred people must have gained admission through my privilege, I very soon found, that, owing to the ease with which these passports

were obtained, what was originally received from me as a *favour*, was soon demanded from me as a *right*, with the actual addition of a request to secure good places, or to procure a private box in lieu.

I soon also found, that every person who received an order, conceived that there was attached to it, all the coxcombry of criticism; and while the paying spectator spontaneously applauded, when his feelings prompted, the *liberty-boy*, influenced by green-room opinions, party spleen, or self-consequence, if he clapped at all, would clap with gloved hands, and when he hissed, often his "custom in the afternoon," would say in excuse for this unexpected courtesy, he thought it was the duty of every one of the author's real friends, to effectively aid his *future* improvement by *present* correction.

During the run of my really popular, half popular, really damned, and half damned pieces, I should imagine, that I have on an average, written or procured, one hundred and fifty double orders to each: consequently calculating from the commencement of my dramatic career, down to the present period, on the aggregate, above fifteen thousand people have, through my privilege alone, entered the theatre *gratis*.

But, to conclude this, in every respect, unprofitable subject, I will merely add, that the only token of gratitude, I ever remember to have received, from the aforesaid fifteen thousand *freemen*, was a short civil note from a pastry-cook's boy in Dean-street, thanking me for his four admissions to the gallery, and requesting my acceptance of a *raspberry puff*, and a little *pigeon pie*!

Only one word more.—In the opinion of those most skilled in the *arcana* of theatrical management, yearly free admissions, not transferable, rather serve a theatre, than injure it, but were I a manager, (which the gods prohibit!) I think I should say "Adieu for ever" to nightly ones—at least, I would only give them to particular friends, certainly not to the town at large, because in opposition to Churchill's well known line,

"And for a playhouse freedom lose their own,"

they now prove nightly that *they*, not the manager, are the *independent* party.

But to return from this digression.—It may be asked whether, while I was thus pursuing ærostatic, canine and other

manias, I had *any* lucid intervals?—Did I report progress in the law? I candidly confess that I did not. On the contrary, instead of getting on, I got, during the spring assizes at Maidstone, a terrific *rap of the knuckles*, from no less a personage than the great Lord Mansfield.

The cause list at these assizes consisted of only eighteen, out of which I had five to conduct, instead of my father, who was absent, either on pleasure or more important business; on which of the two, I submit to the decision of those who are *au fait* in knowledge of character. Holding almost a third of the causes, naturally I was the great man of the day, and when I and my pony trotted into the town, half the bar trotted after us.

“How do you do, Fred?” cried Erskine, “I have not seen you a long time—how are your kind father and mother?”

Then came more suitors to the suits, with the same “generous questions, which no answer wait;” till, at length, I was forced to effect a flying retreat to my inn; where I soon afterwards distributed, the so much coveted briefs, according to my instructions.

The first of our causes, was an action for defamation; and the second, against the same party for an assault. We failed in both; two successive nonsuits! On this, Lord Mansfield emphatically cried,

“Who, and where is the attorney in these causes?”

“Here, my Lord,” replied Erskine; “stand up, Fred!”

I thought I was a dead man!

“So, Sir,” exclaimed his Lordship, “you have brought two actions, with scarcely sufficient grounds for one.—Take care for the future, or you’ll hear further from the Court.”

Exit in disgrace.

In the next cause, we were more fortunate, for, we gained a verdict owing, principally, to the ingenuity of Peckham, our counsel. In legal lore, *nisi prius* volubility, and undaunted browbeating of witnesses, he was surpassed by Dunning, Bearcroft, Lee and others of his contemporaries; but, for the tact of tickling a jury, of creating that sort of *entre-nous-ship*, which leads to a mutual goodwill and understanding, Peckham was unrivalled.

“When, however, the case was clearly against him, in law and evidence, he was above any attempt at coquetry with

the grave twelve; but, when the cause was doubtful; when it hung justly poised, so winning were his manners, so captivating his address, that, often by a word or look, he would turn the balance.

The opposing counsel in this cause, whose name I have forgotten, had an extraordinary habit of *correcting* himself into an *error*; whether from fun, love of singularity, or any other cause, I can not pretend to say. On the cross-examination of one of our witnesses, he literally thus interrogated him.

“On your oath, Sir, what could induce you, or more properly speaking, *conduce* you, to swear that the plaintiff could not rise from his chair?”

To which, the witness, a smart apothecary, replied—

“Sir, I swore what was the fact; for, at that very time, the plaintiff was confined with a lumbago, or more properly speaking, a *bumbago*.^{**}”*

As may be supposed, this reply created great laughter in the court.

The fourth cause, (an action for seduction,) we lost; the fifth, (an action for crim. con.) we won. Then off I started for London; and the assizes being ended, and consequently, no more encountering either greetings or salutations in the market-place, I said with Jane Shore—

“Hark! methinks the roar that late pursued me,
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence.”

On arriving at the Adelphi, I met my father at the door, who, inquiring how many causes I had won, I hung down my head and replied in a palliating tone,

I have only gained two, Sir; but, I assure you, it was not my—”

“What, gained *two* causes out of *five*!” interrupted my father, “why you are a most capital agent, Fred; and as you deserve a holiday, and I am sure, after my extraordinary fatigues, I also require one, do not send away your horse, for I will order mine, and then we will talk the matter over as we trot down to Southbarrow.”

* This barrister, was also equally original in his similes, ex. gr.

** The witness, my Lord, stood plump opposite the defendant—plump, my Lord, *plump as a partridge*.

Law, as usual, formed but a small part of our discourse; which turned principally on a recent addition to the live stock of Southbarrow, while I was absent,—a large wolf, who had been presented to my father by one of his clients, perhaps, in part of payment. He said, that I should see this fine wild animal, caged in the court-yard, and to my expressions of surprise and alarm, he cried—

“Nonsense! old Lion,” (our house dog) “can no longer singly guard the premises, for we are so beset with thieves, that a few nights ago they got into the dairy, and stole all the valuable butter made from my two favourite Alderney cows; and, but for this new and really vigilant watchman, not only all the stock of the farm, but even you, I, and the whole family might be in danger.”

On my arrival, seeing this fierce monster in, what I thought, rather an unsafe cage, I briskly retreated, with numerous shuddering reminiscences of the fate of the unfortunate Red Riding Hood.

Lord Effingham, Lord Rochford, (my brother Richard's friend) Mr. Serjeant Adair, (the Recorder) and Colonel Bird, dined that day at Southbarrow. To the former, I most inadvertently gave the greatest offence, by remarking, just after he had commenced the relation of a comic story,

“Ah, I have *often heard it*, and a devilish good one it is.”

His Lordship thus suddenly checked, frowned, paused, hesitated, and then again resumed the thread of his discourse; but, my *mal à propos* interruption had completely disconcerted him, and the story terminated without the slightest effect.

In an hour or two afterwards, he commenced another tale, but suddenly stopping, he pointedly said—

“Perhaps that young gentleman *has heard this, also?*”

This retort from Lord Effingham procured me a rebuke from my father and my mother; so, not finding myself exactly pleasant to the party, nor the party particularly pleasant to me, I shortly afterwards slunk from the scene of my disgrace, and as it was a fine moonlight evening, proceeded to saunter on the lawn.

Under the influence of “pale Diana's rays,” I became romantic, love-lorn, and poetical; but had scarcely proceeded further in composition, than “Oh! mild as thy moonbeams,” when my reveries were suddenly interrupted, by a howling

noise. Looking up in the direction of the sound, I saw over the top of the lofty, close pales that separated the garden from the yard, the head of the personage with "great eyes, great ears, and great teeth." "Heaven defend me," I exclaimed, "the wolf! the wolf!" What was to be done? He glared full upon me, mounted to the top, was about to spring, when, seeing there was no chance of reaching the great house, I rushed into a less house close at hand.

But to increase the horror of the scene, if possible, the bolt had been removed from the door; and I soon found by the *baying* and *sniffing* without, that my antagonist had pursued me. Placing therefore my back against the door, and my feet against the wall, I remained in this situation for some minutes, all the time lustily roaring for help. Once, on seeing a part of the *wolf's nose* thrust through a hole in the door, I nearly fainted. But the moment of my deliverance was at hand; for, hearing the report of a gun, and the immediate succession of deep groans, I suspected that the enemy was either killed or wounded.

Partially opening the door, and cautiously peeping through the small interstice, I discovered the wounded savage writhing on the ground, surrounded by my father, many of the servants, and my brother, as sportsman of the family, with his discharged rifle in his hand. Rushing forward, I soon learnt, that to our bailiff I was indebted for my emancipation; for he, having heard my cries, had informed my father of the *wolf's* escape; who, not content with killing one of his favourite Alderney cows, might probably also have killed one of his sons, if he, Richard, and the whole *posse comitatus* had not immediately marched to my assistance.*

* So great is the tenacity with which a wolf clings to life, that, though my brother's shot passed through his body, our's did not die till the following morning. But the second time I was in France, I heard a much more extraordinary instance of the vitality of this ferocious animal. Near a forest, on the borders of the Jura, a woman had been so unfortunate as to fall into one of the wolf pits, so abundant in that neighbourhood. She remained there till midnight, when something suddenly alighted on her head, with a force that beat her to the ground. Arising unhurt, she discovered by his hard breathing and low moans, that this unwelcome intruder was a wolf. Instead, however, of inflicting on her the instantaneous death the poor girl expected, her unexpected acquaintance commenced trotting up and down his new domicile, and raising himself on his hinder legs, and placing his

Lord Rochford, the Recorder, and Colonel Bird, had departed before we returned into the parlour; where we found Lord Effingham alone; though in good company,—his own, and his bottle's. He was sitting in that dizzy state of lassitude and luxurious self-complacency which *increase* with the *decrease* of a second bottle, when all burst into the room, charged with our escapes, moving accidents, battle, fire and murder, and each trying to out-vociferate the other.

This sudden change from calm to storm, naturally again excited his Lordship's bile against *me*, whom he deemed the cause; so, after two or three vain attempts to impose silence, he raised his voice to a *super-alto*, exclaiming—

“ Fred, I have heard a story like this before, and *a devilish good one it is!* Hear it, and judge for yourself. A traveller was once attacked in a desert, by three wild and ferocious beasts. ‘ After a tremendous conflict,’ he said, ‘ I killed the first with my pistol; the head of the second I severed from his body with a single cut of my trusty seymetar, and,’ ‘ Oh I see the end!’ interrupted an impertinent auditor, ‘ you killed the third with your other pistol.’—‘ No,’ replied the traveller, ‘ I did not, he *kILLED* me!’—I don’t know,” continued his Lordship, “ whether this exactly applies to the present subject, but, I tell it in the hope of *killing* your story, as you *killed* mine.”

After a pause, and an exchange of looks between me and my father, I proceeded to offer an ample apology; when his Lordship abruptly interrupting me, and meeting me more than half way in my attempt to regain his accustomed good-will, shook me kindly by the hand, and said,

“ Now, brother story-teller, we start fair!”

huge paws on the terrified female’s back, with low whines and howls expressive of the most abject terror, he conciliatingly licked her neck and hands, thus affording another example of a captured wolf being deprived of ferocity. In the morning, the hunters arriving, they released the girl from her disagreeable situation, and then fired their carbines into the pit. The wolf falling senseless, they descended, tied his legs with a cord, and throwing him across a pole, conveyed him to their home, and afterwards again repaired to the forest in quest of fresh sport. When they returned in the evening the wolf had fled, leaving behind him ample proofs of his vitality in the *dead* remnants of a fine sheep.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DRAMA.

“ E'en all mankind to some lov'd ills incline;
Great men choose greater sins,—ambition's mine!”

RICHARD THE THIRD.

I REPEAT, that not being a critic myself, but rather the cause of criticism in others, I shall not now attempt to offer a full, true and particular account of the first appearance of Holman, in *Romeo*, October 26th, 1784; nor, of Pope, on the 5th of January, in the following year. Miss Brunton, and Mrs. Jordan likewise commenced their theatrical career in the ensuing October; but, I shall also omit all description of them; particularly, as a critical examination of the merits, and demerits of these performers, has been so ably executed in the Life of John Kemble, by my friend Boaden, a gentleman, who, as Addison says of Horace, “shows that candour which distinguishes a critic from a *caviller*.”

I will, however, dwell for a moment on a last appearance which I witnessed, namely, that of Mrs. Bellamy; who took her leave of the stage, May the 24th, 1785.

On this occasion, Mrs. Yates, who had retired from the profession, performed the part of the *Duchess of Braganza*, and Miss Farren, the present Countess of Derby, spoke an address, which concluded with the following couplet:—

“ But see, oppress'd with gratitude and tears,
To pay her dutious tribute, she appears.”

The curtain then ascended, and Mrs. Bellamy being discovered, the whole house immediately arose, to mark their favourable inclinations towards her, and from anxiety to obtain a view of this once celebrated actress, and, in consequence of the publication of her life, then celebrated authoress. She was

seated in an arm chair, from which she in vain attempted to rise, so completely was she subdued by her feelings. She, however, succeeded in muttering a few words, expressive of her gratitude, and then sinking into her seat, the curtain dropped before her; having by these few farewell words, perhaps, more deeply affected her audience, than by her best efforts in *Juliet* and *Cleone*.*

During the spring of this same year, Miss Eliza Proctor, the youngest sister of the Countess of Effingham, then about seventeen years of age, arrived in town, from Thorpe, her residence in Yorkshire. Amongst the many sighing and sonneteering victims, made by her artless engaging manners, and surprising and enchanting beauty, I was soon included.

Her person, accomplishments, wealth and family, rendered her *recherché* by every aspirant to gallantry and *ton*, within her circle of acquaintance; and at Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and other public places, she literally attracted crowds of young, aye, and of old men, both of fashion, and no fashion. The late old Duke of ——— was so smitten by her, that he set in motion every engine, deemed by him most capable of effecting a successful result; but, at length, conscious of his failure, he left London, and, as was his custom in cases of love rebuffs, proceeded to Bath, there to swallow his chagrin, and the waters, for a month.

As may be conceived, it was actually a service of danger to escort this splendid beauty to any public place; and though I had frequently the honour of being selected for this arduous office, I can boldly aver, that I was not selected on account of my courage, and *martial* disposition, but, wholly owing to the intimacy of my father and my mother, with Lord and Lady Effingham.

At the Adelphi and Southbarrow, I had continual opportunities of declaring my inclinations, and proffering my vows; but, Eliza's views naturally soared higher than a young Tem-

* Mrs. Bellamy was not only a beautiful woman, but a most accomplished actress. She was the successful rival of Miss Nossiter, during the tedious *Romeo and Juliet* contest between Garrick and Barry. She also established Dodsley's play of *Cleone*, refused by Garrick; and without referring to the *Apology for her Life*, it will be seen in various publications, that in the opinion of Quin, Garrick, and other critical contemporaries, she surpassed even Mrs. Woffington in conversational powers.

ple student; and though, from good humour or some other cause, she would occasionally encourage me, in our *tête-à-tête* rambles by a kind look, or even kinder expressions, my rivals were too numerous, and too formidable both in rank and fortune, to allow me much hope of ultimate success. “Under such untoward circumstances, how am I to withstand the efforts of my competitors?” I used to think. “How make an equal, and then, a paramount impression? Only by obtaining celebrity or notoriety;” at that time, as now, nearly synonymous terms.

But, how was either to be obtained? By entering the army? No. By entering the navy? No. By—yes—I have it—I have it. I’ll write a *tragedy*, I’ll be d—d if I *do not*,” forgetting that others may say “you will be d—d if *you do*.”

I soon proceeded to work, having chosen for my subject that popular hero of the sighing tribe, *WERTER*! After planning the outline, and writing the first speech, I had but one fear, that of breaking, by my dramatic pathos, the heart of her, on whose life I thought my own depended.

When my occupation became known to the family, my father grumbled and called it folly; Richard smiled, and called it vanity; Jack still charged with the “Indian Scalp,” for which his bookseller had sufficiently *charged* him, called it insanity; but, as he and I no longer slept in the same chamber, I could not take advantage of the opportunity my tragedy presented, of repaying him all his former poetical inflictions.

I soon began to think that I had emerged from obscurity; that I was another Otway, Rowe, or Southern; and sometimes, after a day of uncommon inspiration, fancied, that, in the stream of fame, the *goose* of the *Adelphi* might perhaps, at last, glide past the “*swan*” of *Avon*. In fact, I was very disagreeable, and though I perfectly understood what

“A youthful poet *fancied* when in love,”

I could not conceive there existed youthful poets, whom nobody *fancied*.

The tragedy being at length finished, the first friend I requested to peruse it, was Mr. Fonblanche, the King’s Counsel. Having a high opinion of his judgment, I was most satisfied, when I heard him pronounce my tragedy “by no means con-

temptible;" as, from so good a critic and scholar, I deemed this great praise.

The next gentleman I consulted was another barrister, the late Mr. Serjeant Bolton, who, during the previous year, had become extremely intimate with our family. But I here put my head into the lion's jaws; for the Serjeant, either not choosing to exert his judgment, or wishing at once to damp my dramatic propensities, and thus induce me to return to the study of my profession, he told my father, that if the cause came into court in its present state, unless we could procure a jury of *little masters and misses*, the plaintiff must inevitably be nonsuited.

But the beautiful Eliza's opinion! On *that*, rested all my hopes and fears. I panted for my hour of trial, which, however, soon arrived; for, during the succeeding week, I was requested by Lady Effingham to dine with her, at her house in Great George-street; and to bring the manuscript with me, as no other person was to be present excepting her sister.

The important day being arrived, I hastened, all anxiety, to Great George-street. After hurrying down my dinner, and after making my hostess, I fear, follow my example, notwithstanding the learned Serjeant's hostile opinion, with little doubt of a verdict in my favour, I boldly opened the pleadings. Having read my list of the *dramatis personæ*, and a few introductory speeches, in the first act, between *Charlotte* and *Laura*, her confidante, I proceeded, all exultation, to the approach of my hero.

"Enter WERTER!" I exclaimed, energetically.

At this moment, the door opened, and a servant entered with a letter, which Lady Effingham having opened and read, calling for pens, ink and paper, and apologizing to me for the interruption, as the writer was urgent for an immediate answer, she proceeded to write one.

Here was *real tragic* distress! It was not, however, of long continuance; for her work soon concluded, mine again commenced; and I proceeded to the end of act the first, without further interruption; though, certainly without any particular encouragement. At the close of a scene in the second act, where I had not anticipated any more than the common applause, which I considered due to the whole piece, to my sur-

prise and joy I received a distinguished portion from Lady Effingham.

“ Bravo! very good indeed!” she exclaimed, in a low, subdued tone, as if evidently affected, and overcome by the pathos of my hero and heroine.

I raised my head, preparing to utter a polite acknowledgment expressive of my gratitude and gratification, when to the utter discomfiture of my self-complacency, I perceived that her Ladyship was *asleep*. Disturbed by the turbulent vehemence with which I enforced the sentiments of my two lovers, her Ladyship had half awakened, and mechanically and unconsciously muttering her little eulogium, had instantaneously relapsed into her slumber.

Eliza, discovering my confusion, jogged her sister’s arm, who now thoroughly aroused, and still affecting to be highly gratified, proceeded sympathetically and regularly to nod approbation, through the remainder of the act.

It should be here observed, that by this time I had completely read the *fire out*; but, warm with my subject, and feeling insensible to any change of temperature, I proceeded in my perusal, till I reached Werter’s soliloquy on suicide. Here, I hoped Eliza would have so far applied his case to mine, as to have induced her to have shed some few tears of sympathy, particularly in the following passage:—

“ WERTER.

“ O, Charlotte, when the grave holds all that’s left
Of that unhappy, agitated being,
Who knew no pleasure but in sight of thee:—
O, when you wander through your long-lov’d vale,
Then think on Werter.
Look towards the church-yard that contains his bones,
And see with pity how the evening breeze
Waves the high grass that grows upon his grave.”

Feeling certain, that sighs, at least, if not sobs, would respond to this pathetic invocation, none but a tragic poet can imagine the horrors inflicted by the sound which crossed my ears. It was—it was a *sneeze*! I looked up, and to increase, if possible, my mortification, found that my own beloved Eliza’s little mouth was the cause of this harsh and humiliating interruption. Another, and another *sneeze* followed. Self-lover

that I was! I had caused that chilliness in the atmosphere, which possibly might even cause her death.

A fire was immediately ordered to be lighted; and while this necessary ceremony was proceeding, Lord Effingham entered the room. He had just returned from the house, where he had carried a motion by a large majority, and was consequently in high spirits and good humour. Eliza's chilliness being at length expelled by a milder temperture, and by a hearty embrace from her affectionate brother-in-law, I was requested by all parties to proceed with my tragedy.

Once more, therefore, I commenced, and continued without interruption, till I reached the scene where *Albert* quits his wife, *Charlotte*, to attend the *Emperor*; leaving *Werter* in the neighbourhood, with free ingress to his own house. Here Lord Effingham, who, apparently, had heard of Sergeant Bolton's legal opinion relative to my play, exclaimed—

“I do not know, Fred, whether *you* will or will not be nonsuited; but I am *certain*, that if your friend *Albert* comes into court, he can not expect more than one shilling damages.”

They both smiled, and most involuntarily I was compelled to attempt a melancholy copy of their example; but that being terminated without further preface, I again returned to the charge. However, I felt that the tide evidently flowed against me, until I reached the scene, where, the applicable readings from Ossian are introduced; and then, I saw, or fancied I saw, I was beginning to make some little progress towards the attainment of a less disagreeable opinion. The following extract particularly, produced an effect:—

“Her voice died away like the evening breeze among the grass of the rocks; spent with grief she expired, and left thee, O Armin—alone!”

I then proceeded to read, after the example of the German school, the following instruction to the actors:—

[“Here *Werter* throws down the book, seizes *Charlotte*'s hand, and weeps over it. She leans on her other hand, holding her handkerchief to her eyes. In this unhappy story, they feel their own misfortunes. At length, *Charlotte* exclaims, as if exerting her utmost to recover her self-possession—‘Go on.’”

Perceiving there was an increasing, and to me, most interesting silence amongst my audience, I looked up, and beheld

with ecstasy, Eliza's beautiful blue eyes glistening through her tears; and even Lady Effingham, quite awake, sat apparently listening to every syllable, while Lord Effingham lolled on a sofa, quietly mixing his Madeira and water.

Scarcely had I with a single *coup d'œil* embraced the whole of this scene, than wild with joy and exulting in my subject, I returned to my readings from Ossian.

“The time of my fading is near, and the blast that shall scatter my leaves. To-morrow shall the traveller come—he who saw me in my beauty shall come. His eyes shall search the field, but—they will not find me!”

Then I proceeded to read more of my German-like instructions to the performers.

[Werter, in despair, throws himself on the ground at Charlotte's feet, seizes her hand, and presses it energetically to his forehead. Here an apprehension of his fatal project for the first time crosses her, and she exclaims—

“Heavens! suicide! am I to be so cursed?

O Werter! Werter!”

[Falls upon him.

“WERTER.

“I will not lose thee—

Thus let me ever clasp thee to my heart!

[“Here they lose sight of every thing, and the whole world disappears before them. He clasps her in his arms, he strains her to his bosom, and—”]

* To show that the above instructions to the performers are not exaggerated imitations of the original school, the following specimen from Reitzenstein's play of *Count Koeningsmark* will suffice.

“KOENINGSMARK.

“O transporting thought! To pass our days in peace, innocence, and sweet retirement.

“Oh! I lose myself in the beauty of the picture. (*In ecstasy.*) Oh! my friend—my—yes, I once called you Sophia!—Sophia—Oh! my Sophia.”

[“He is unable to say more—the recollection of their former life draws their hearts irresistibly towards each other. With sympathetic eagerness and rapture, they fall into each other's arms.”]

Again, in Schroeder's play of the *Ensign*.—

[“Baron walks to and fro in sullen meditation—becomes absent—and at once forgets every thing which relates to the ‘Ensign.’ While endeavouring to recollect the subject, he passes from one idea to another, until he finds the note, then remembers the cause of his agitation, and walks furiously up and down the stage.”]

The unfortunate actor, from whom the exacting author demands such unexampled versatility and expression of countenance, is placed in a situation

“Stop, stop, Master Fred!” exclaimed Lord Effingham, to my horror and dismay, in a voice of thunder; and hastily depositing his empty tumbler on the table, he continued, “Though you and your cursed tragedy can not corrupt either me or my wife, you may corrupt my young sister. Eliza, Fred is a fool, a *German fool*, unconsciously violating both decorum and decency; so, instead of sitting there, staring, sighing and gasping for breath, I think you had better quit the room. Surely, I thought we had for ever had enough of this sighing, whining, German Werter two months ago, when our friend and neighbour, Miss G. was found self-destroyed in her bed, with this pitiful romance under her pillow.”

Luckily for me and poor Eliza, at this confounding moment, he was suddenly interrupted by a loud knocking at the door, and immediately afterwards Mr. Beckford and a friend entered the room. They seemed surprised at finding the whole party in a state of considerable agitation, and each manifesting it, in such opposite manners. Lady Effingham totally unable to speak, sat observing, and examining each individual in rotation, as if more astonished, than afflicted; Eliza, more afflicted than astonished, with her eyes still drowned in tears, vainly endeavoured to smother in her handkerchief, her sighs and sobs; Lord Effingham, more indignant than astonished or afflicted, sat banging his foot against the fender, as, after two or three gulps, he attempted to grumble out to Mr. Beckford some inquiry relative to Fonthill; while I, silent, solemn, frightened, insulted and splenetic, stood,

“Like Helen on the night that Troy was sacked,
Spectat’ress of the mischief she had made.”

After a few more ineffectual attempts, conversation at length *really* commenced; and Mr. Beckford and his friend, being *belles lettres* men, they, and Lord Effingham, conversed principally on literary subjects. First, on Gibbon; then, on Miss Burney; when, Lord Effingham freely expressed his admiration for “Cecilia,” particularly for that part of it, where the death of Harrell occurs; Doctor Johnson, (for whose opinions,

more difficult, though probably less *self-distressing*, to execute, than that of the representatives of *Rogero*, in the *Rovers*, who is ordered to “dash his head against his prison walls, till he raises a visible confusion.”

his Lordship always exhibited evident deference) having given that scene his decided approbation.

To the knowledge of character and humour displayed in Briggs, Miss Larolles, and Meadows, they also accorded their due applause. Cecilia herself they much admired: her fine pride, her warmth of attachment, and even her madness, though Lord Effingham wished the climax of it, had resulted from some stronger cause, than her being detained by a drunken coachman.

“Apropos of novels,” exclaimed Mr. Beckford, “has your Ladyship read *WERTER*?”

“Oh, ho!” thought I, emerging from my sullen reverie, “*redivivos ignes!* Now comes my tragedy again!”—and I boldly arose, and traversing the room, planted myself close to Mr. Beckford, “ready for the fray.”

“No, Sir,” replied Lady Effingham, confused by the question, but still more confused by my action; “no, Sir—in fact—for that part,” (a cant phrase of her Ladyship) “but, I have heard of it.”

“It is very strange,” rejoined Mr. Beckford, “that like other leading subjects of the day, it has never been dramatized?”

I hemmed triumphantly, and cast a look of exultation on his Lordship.

“What you say is indeed very strange,” exclaimed Mr. Beckford’s friend; “for *WERTER* would make a most capital *burlesque* interlude.”

Dismayed, crest-fallen, I retreated to my chair; *Burlesque!* To sink me thus in my idol’s opinion! Confusion! and muttering, I retired to my seat, endeavouring to collect sufficient courage, to say something terrible in vindication of my aspersed hero.

The gentleman, then, proceeded to state, that, during his travels, he had seen, at Manheim, the very person who was reported to have been Göethe’s original Werter.

“Was he very handsome?” immediately inquired Lady Effingham, with truly feminine feelings.

“Handsome!” repeated with derision, my unintentional tormentor; “his appearance, and dress alone, would almost ensure the success of any burlesque. Imagine a squat, fat figure, with a swarthy complexion, and thick, shaggy eye-

brows, placed diagonally enough to produce the most tragically sentimental expression of countenance, was not their effect completely counteracted by the twinkling of two little, half buried, comical eyes, resembling those of a kitten. Imagine also a pair of breeches more fit for a family residence, than an individual's, and an immense Hecklingen hat, the circumference of which a snail would scarcely describe in a week, absolutely engulfing the little head beneath it; and then, imagine, protruding from the back of the hat, a *little erect pig-tail*, similar to that which our excellent buffo, Edwin, wears in *Derby*; and there's *WERTER* for you!"

Here, Lord Effingham, more from examining my countenance, than from the effect of the description, could no longer contain his laughter. Lady Effingham tittered aloud, and, *horresco referens!* even the charming Eliza smiled! It was now my turn to sigh and sob. I saw no more, heard no more, but, seizing a moment when I was not observed, I stole from the room, and hastening home, in a paroxysm of spleen and vexation flung myself on my bed; where, at last, I inveighed myself into sleep, and an oblivion of all the disgraces attached to *WERTER*, and myself, during this eventful scene, vowing with Terence,

"Henceforth I'll banish from my mind,
All thought of fickle womankind!"*

So much for the reading of a TRAGEDY!

Lord Effingham, the following morning, making the *amende honourable*, by assuring me that, in spite of the burlesque allusions, and his own reprehensions, the ladies and himself were much pleased with the tragedy, I forgot all my vows, my sorrows, and became again as much *en l'air* as ever. He then proceeded to inform me, that if I would give him the manuscript, after the correction of a few verbal errors, and the purification of the actors' instructions, from a portion of their glowing ardour, he would recommend it to his friend, the manager of Covent Garden Theatre, and exert himself to the utmost, to aid its success, both behind and before the curtain.

I had now gained one of my principal ends; my tragedy

* *Deleo omnes dehinc ex animo mulieres*—Ter. *Eun.* Act 2. Sc. 3.

had drawn tears from Eliza Proctor, made her *miserable*, and, consequently, I was completely happy. Serjeant Bolton, calling the next day, and kindly informing me that, though he had formerly endeavoured to check me, yet, as he saw I was determined to present my tragedy, he now also would exert himself to procure it a favourable reception, from his friend, Mr. Harris. This increased, if possible, my happiness.

In less than a week from the above period, the famous *WERTER* was accordingly sent, with a double recommendation to the manager, that magnificent, potent being, in my eyes, then the *greatest man* in the kingdom. Nor was I singular in this opinion, for I know that, during the same year, a dramatic novice actually sent his play to the theatre, thus directed:

“ To the Right Honourable,
LORD HARRIS;
Theatre Royal,
Covent Garden.”

So confident was I of his Lordship’s decision in my favour, and of the utter impossibility of a rejection, that, on the following day, meeting Serjeant Bolton in Pall Mall, and he informing me he had heard from Mr. Harris, that my play had been *received*, I replied, adjusting my cravat with much importance, “ Certainly—you don’t think he could have refused it?”

“ Why, Fred,” exclaimed the Serjeant, “ this tragic mania has already driven you mad or foolish; for, though I am not particularly conversant with theatrical technicalities, according to my construction, the word *received* is more likely to mean *arrived*, than accepted;” then shaking me by the hand, he continued his way, leaving me certainly not quite so sanguine as he found me.

Still, however, so firmly convinced was I, of *WERTER*, not only deserving, but, of commanding acceptance, that I speedily rallied; and though day after day passed without any communication from Mr. Harris, with the most wilful blindness, I persisted in ascribing the delay to any cause but the real one.

One evening, when my father and brothers were sitting after dinner, listening, or rather turning a deaf ear, to my eter-

nal, increasing and sanguine speculations, relative to my tragedy, Owen, the footman, entered, and said a person of the name of Ledger wished to speak to me.

“ Ledger, Ledger,” repeated Jack; “ I rather think it is I whom he wants; has he not a parcel, Owen?”

Owen replied in the affirmative.

“ Right!” rejoined Jack, and then added, turning towards my father, “ It is our stationer’s foreman, with a supply of foolscap and goose quills for the office—tell him to leave them.”

Ledger obeyed, left the parcel, and the footman immediately returned with it.

On opening it, Jack evinced the utmost surprise; stared, turned over the papers, gazed at my father and brother, and then casting on me, an odd, indescribable look, he exclaimed in a tone of half real, half affected sympathy—

“ Why, Fred, it is for you after all!”

It was, indeed!—Instead of *foolscap and goose quills*, lo, the *tragedy!*”*

There was a letter attached to it from Mr. Harris, which I eagerly opened, and hurried over, almost breathless with agitation and impatience.

“ On account—warm recommendation—Lord Effingham—Serjeant Bolton—also—young author, himself—wish—happy to give *Tragedy* a Trial—but—but—convinced in representation totally—fail—fail—refuse!”

“ Mercy on us!” cried I—and the letter dropped from my hand. I looked around for sympathy and consolation, but father, brother, Jack, had all slyly stolen away during the perusal, dreading a real tragic explosion. “ See how the deer trot after one another,” and leave “ thee, O Armin,—alone!”

That the tragedy was afterwards refused at Drury-lane and the Haymarket, and that, consequently, both I and WERTER went to Bath for *our healths*, has been so often obtruded on public notice, that I will now spare the reader the repetition of this most important event, and pass to the moment of our joint arrival in that city; where I fixed my residence at Miss Erskine’s Boarding House, Queen-square.

* Ledger was the name of the person, who at that time held the situation of chief messenger in the Theatre.

On the following morning, with now scarcely any hope of success, I sent the fatal foolscap parcel to Messrs. Dimond and Keasberry, the managers of the Bath Theatre. Here, again, I remained so considerable a time without an answer, that, aided by anxiety, ill-health, lowness of purse and spirits, and solitary promenades, I passed a melancholy time, and daily felt, or fancied that I felt, "all was falling to decay."

Whilst in this pitiable state, I heard one morning, Mr. Armstrong, a fellow boarder at Miss Erskine's, say, that he had just quitted the theatre; where he had seen the painters employed on a most beautiful garden scene, for a new tragedy, which was to be immediately produced. Was it—was it mine? "The name of it!" I cried, starting from my chair in an agony of hope and fear.

"Werter," he replied.

"At last!" said I, and I felt my old hornpipe tendencies immediately return. Perhaps, I should even have yielded to them, and commenced capering on the spot, had I not, at that very moment been interrupted by a letter from the manager, which in very complimentary language, summoned me to a rehearsal on the following day.

After a restless joyous night, at the appointed time I strutted behind the scenes, already wearing, in my own opinion, the laurel crown. The novelty of a rehearsal, my consequential instructions to the actors, of which they took not the slightest notice, and my condescending attentions to the actresses, for which they showed a cool contempt, may be more easily conceived than described. The consequent result of this style soon ensued;—Messrs. Dimond and Keasberry finding me, though tolerable in theory, so deficient in practice, deposed me, made themselves viceroys over me, and produced *Werter* under their own immediate superintendence.

The awful, momentous night arrived on November 25th, 1785. As Dr. Johnson is reported to have dressed himself in a gold-laced waistcoat, and other decorations, on the first performance of the tragedy of *Irene*, I thought, though one of the *poetæ minores*, I was yet bound to attempt some little display on the first performance of mine. I was therefore conveyed in a sedan chair, even to the very door of the green room; where I got out, in a dress of which, though I can not now detail the

component parts, I can very well remember it was as a whole, a perfect failure.

Not finding myself sufficiently noticed by the company, I indignantly withdrew, and peeped through the hole in the green curtain, with the intent of noticing the audience. To my infinite gratification, I beheld the house crammed to the ceiling; and by the number of white handkerchiefs spread on the fronts of the boxes, in imitation of a similar ceremony which was regularly performed during the height of the Siddons rage, I guessed that fashion had prejudged *Werter*; and was even induced to hope, that amongst the worshippers of this popular name, a contest might arise, as to which should render him, or herself, most conspicuous in the various arduous arts of clapping, weeping and fainting.

The curtain arose, and soon came the proof that I had not been over sanguine in my expectations. On the announcement of the approach of their idol, I heard "the hum of either army" preparing for the field; but on the entrance of Mr. Dimond, (my hero,) then a very handsome man, and a most interesting actor, the whole theatre was shaken to its foundations by acclamations.

Before the end of the scene between *Charlotte* and *Werter*, in the first act, we knew that the handkerchiefs were in full request, by the grateful sound of certain nasal noises, most exhilarating to tragic authors and actors. Still further, however, to gratify and encourage us, Mrs. Bernard, the representative of *Charlotte*, on making her exit, proceeded straight to the green room, and there wished the manager and me joy of our certain success, adding,

"Such is the storm of passion, or of fashion, I, and the other performers need give ourselves no further trouble—the actors in the *front* will alone secure the success of your tragedy."

In the garden scene, where *Albert* and *Charlotte* mutually endeavour to compose *Werter*, we were delighted by the sound of the first fit, and by the scent of its usual concomitant, hartshorn. Shortly afterwards, I saw from the stage door, one of the principal female competitors in singularity and affection, conveyed, in a highly interesting state of graceful insensibility, from one of the side boxes into the lobby.

In the scene of the readings from *Ossian*, where the whole world disappears from before *Charlotte* and *Werter*, three

more fainted, and so precisely at the same moment, that being a complete *neck and neck* business, the best judges could not decide which of them had won the race.

Still, it should be understood, that, as usual, there were certain unprejudiced Johns and Joans in the house, who did not yield to the attacks of this meretricious mania, or at least, only submitted to it for a time. The moment of retribution arrived in the fifth act; where, *Charlotte* seeking *Sebastian*, *Werter's* friend, suddenly meets, and wildly implores him to follow her lover, and save him from destruction. The actor who played *Sebastian*, stared, started and paused, as if his memory had been playing the traitor to him. The frantic *Charlotte*, with the view of screening him from detection, or of recalling his recollection, seized him by the arm, and in a tone of agony, exclaimed,

“ Fly, lose not a moment—suicide!”

“ Heavens!” replied *Sebastian*, in a most evident state of confusion, and then added,

“ I'm rooted here, and have not power to stir!”

As he thus spoke, he crossed *Charlotte*, and made as rapid an *exit* as ever was witnessed on any stage.

The circumstance of this actor being a comedian, and rarely employed in tragedy, gave, if possible, additional zest to the sudden roars and confusion which now ensued. For a short time the ardour of our predetermined admirers received a check; but towards the close, fashion again carried all before it. On the death of *Werter*, and the madness of *Charlotte*, the curtain dropped amidst thunders of applause, and the play was announced for repetition on the ensuing evening, with “ *Nem. con. egad!*”

I need not remind the theatrical reader, that, though we fortunately survived the effects of the above ludicrous exit, it had very nearly laid the foundation for a second death for *Werter*, at the close of the last act; and a first, and final death, for the whole remainder of the characters. It is almost awful for a dramatist to reflect on the infinite number of fortunate causes which must conjoin, or rather, of unlucky events that must *not* occur, to ensure the success of his piece.

The banging of a box door has often engulfed the most ad-

mirable witticism, in its “noise of horror;” an inch of gauze, or silk, “absent without leave,” from the corsage of an indecorous “*Entretenué*,” attracting the turbulent and dissonant reprobation of the moral galleries, has ruthlessly marred the effects of a whole scene of polished hexameters and poetical imagery; and a north east wind, through its subservient coughs, catarrhs and deflections, has often commenced, and continued its outrages on harmony and taste, during the finest cadenza of the most brilliant bravura. Dramatists! dramatists! on this latter grievance, (I speak from sad experience) produce your plays in summer, autumn, winter, if you will, but—“beware the ides of March!”

Independently, however, of errors in actors, an author is frequently indebted to his own incidents for his failure, which, though perhaps good in themselves, unfortunately allowing of a double interpretation, afford the malicious, or witty part of the audience, opportunities for a dangerous misapplication or allusion. Many are aware of the incident that occurred during the first representation of Voltaire’s *Mariamne*, which had proceeded with every mark of approbation to the middle of the fifth act, when the heroine takes poison. During this operation, a wag exclaiming, with assumed astonishment, “*ma foi, the queen drinks*,” converted the whole pathos into burlesque, and the piece concluded amidst hisses, laughter and execrations.

Another cause of failure is somewhere related; where the two heroes of a tragedy, agreeing to divide the kingdom between them, a stentorian voice from the gallery exclaimed—

“Then there’s *half-a-crown* a-piece for you, my boys!”

But a more ludicrous perversion than either of the above, in my opinion, was that which I myself witnessed, during the first performance of a play called, to the best of my recollection, “*The Captives*.” In the fifth act, a character, named *Rhyno*, rushed on the stage, declaring to the hero, “My Lord, the citadel is taken!” while we, the audience, had no idea that there was either a war, or even a pretence for one. The person addressed, after commanding various military manœuvres, and reciting an invocation to Mars, turned towards *Rhyno*, exclaiming with chivalrous enthusiasm—

“Charge, then, charge!
Now—art thou ready, *Rhyno*? ”

The laugh which followed this pecuniary interrogation, scarcely subsided after the falling of the curtain.

The epilogue to *Werter*, written by Mr. Meyler, was extremely effective, particularly in the following appropriate lines, which, having never been published, deserve insertion here, were it only in the hope of giving additional notoriety to the credit and reputation the Bath audience and management have already derived, from their production and encouragement of so many of our principal actors:—

“ Who gave the bright theoretic star a name,
And led the Siddons to the paths of fame?

You!

Who reared the tender bud, whose dawn now draws,
On *Juliet* and *Euphrasia* just applause?*

You!

Here Henderson!—but memory heaves a sigh,
And points to where, scarce cold, his ashes lie!†
Here, here his genuine worth did first appear,
And Comedy first found her Edwin here.”

The Bath papers the following morning were very liberal in their praises and encouragement. *Werter*, therefore, continued his career so prosperously, and my *importance* in society augmented so rapidly, that I was not much surprised when Mr. King, the then lately elected master of the ceremonies, (and who also boarded at Miss Erskine's,) informed me one morning at breakfast, that I must accompany him to the pump-room, where several people were waiting to be introduced to me.

I followed him, all exultation; and though the band, on perceiving me, did not exactly commence, “ See the conquering hero comes,” yet, my reception was dangerously flattering. Amongst others, who warmly congratulated me on my success, were the late Archbishop of Armagh, Lady Abingdon, Miss Sophia Lee, (the authoress of the “ *Chapter of Accidents*”) her sister, Miss Harriette Lee, Pratt, (the author of “ *Sympathy*”) and Sir Thomas Lawrence, in early life the rival of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and now, “ *Abroad and at Home*,” without a rival.

* Miss Brunton, afterwards Mrs. Merry.

† This epilogue was first spoken on the day when Mr. Henderson was interred.

But the great feather in my cap was an intimation from Mrs. Macartney, the *old queen* of Bath, that she would visit the theatre on Tuesday, and if she approved of *Werter*, she would honour the author, by an invitation to her grand ball and supper on Thursday.

Werter was afterwards performed at Bristol on the 27th of the same month. I recollect nothing out of the common way which occurred in that town, except the more important event of being introduced to Miss Hannah More, her sister, and Major Halliday, the great private actor; and of going to the theatre, mentally secure of another triumph; but of being compelled to make an ignominious retreat before the termination of the second act, owing to the too critical taste of a stranger who sat next me, and who, tapping my shoulder, exclaimed—

“ Wretched sad stuff, Sir; and if you will begin to hiss, I will join you heart and soul.”

Being suddenly summoned to London, I was relieved from the suspense of longer waiting the Queen of Bath’s decision. My reception at home was most gratifying. My fond mother and my aunt exaggerating my success, and elated by this partial complexion of their prophecy that I should become a great man, alluded contemptuously to the *Welch judgeship*. Richard, pursuing the idea, added that possibly without troubling Mr. Pitt, a niche might be found in the *History of England*. Jack declared that to him belonged all the merit of my success, for the *Indian Scalp* “ had taught the boy to write.” My father, doubting whether to adopt the tone of panegyric or censure, with hesitation asked, if I had gained anything besides the *vox populi*? I replied in the negative. “ Then,” he cried, “ stick to a declaration, or a bill in chancery, my boy; for though they are pretty sure not to be applauded, they *may be encored*, and they *must be paid for*.”

But the goddess of my idolatry, the chief object of my ambition—the soul, the essence of my real and dramatic existence, Eliza—how—how was she to receive me? Why, not at all. Her mother, alarmed, harassed and persecuted, by the increasing admiration her daughter excited, had hurried her back to their mansion at Thorpe in Yorkshire; and for twelve whole years I never saw her again. Thus my love terminated, without even Waller’s consolation; for, I could *not* be vain enough to say—

"I caught at love, and fill'd my arms with bays."

Werter, instead of *falling off*, to use the dramatic phrase, *got up*, and continued to attract full and fashionable audiences. Of this welcome intelligence, I was informed by Mr. Palmer, then the principal proprietor of the Bath and Bristol theatres, and afterwards member for Bath, and inventor of a plan which increased the revenue of the country, guarded private property, and conveyed intelligence, with a rapidity exceeding even conjecture. I allude to the present mode of conveying the mail.

I afterwards frequently met him at Mrs. Nuttall's, whom I have before mentioned. He was very kind and complimentary to me on my success, and a few days afterwards introduced me to Miss Brunton, then the tragic star of Covent Garden Theatre. Mr. Brunton selecting *Werter* for his daughter's benefit, it was produced before a London audience, for the first time, on March the 14th, 1786.

Owing to the accustomed determination of the Londoners, not to be surpassed in fashion and folly by the provincials, and to the popularity of Holman and Miss Brunton, *Werter's* metropolitan was equal, if not superior to his rural success.

Thus much for *Werter*, my first dramatic attempt; of which I can not close the account, without stating, that if I had gained nothing else by it, it gained me more than a sufficient remuneration, by conducing to the formation of the strict friendship, which afterwards so long existed between me and the late George Holman; as also to that with Morton, which has endured uninterruptedly to the present moment. The latter may remember, that on the day Holman introduced us to each other in a room over Exeter 'Change, we had a violent quarrel concerning a point at billiards; our first and last quarrel during an intimacy of forty years; and notwithstanding that we have passed thirty of this period, in constant contact and competition, as rival dramatists.

While on a voyage of discovery for a popular subject for my next tragedy, (for having once commenced, in course, I did not form the most distant idea of *concluding* under a clear *twenty*) it struck me, that, after *Werter*, no name could shine so attractively and enticingly, in a play bill, as *Eloisa*,—not poor Abelard's, but Rousseau's.

I commenced, and as a warning to present, and to future, young dramatists, never to enter rashly on a subject, and with the hope of teaching them to avoid my errors, I will describe my absurd and laborious style of composition. I was, in fact, a *thinker on paper*; and made it a rule, by asking myself written questions, and my characters questions, or by hints, references, and directions, to fill four pages every day. Of the quality of this quantity, *ecce signum!* In the rough outline of this tragedy, now before me, I read in the second page,

SCENE.

A GARDEN.

Enter Eloisa.

Then follows,

“ Well now, my darling, what have you to say for yourself?”

Again in the following page:

“ Vide Rousseau—St. Preux, Lord Edward Bomston, and M. Wolmar—three lovers—bravo Julie! Quere—Can I venture to introduce the letter of the French child of nature in the novel of —— I forget the name—

“ My dear Mamma,

“ Though I am dying for love of the Marquis, I can not refuse the Count nightly assignations.—Can you tell me the reason?

“ I remain, ma chere Maman,

“ Yours, &c. &c.”

“ Apropos of scenery—not too much of the stage carpenter.”

“ I trusted to the carpenter, and the inconsistent wind.”

“ But the actors—the cast—neither Holman, nor Pope, will play Bomston, notwithstanding he is a *lord*.”

“ The rose by any other name, would smell as sweet.”

“ Rousseau, when he named this proud character, forgot the unfortunate associations, which the habit of converting the long open O, into the short sounding U, might create in the breasts of his English readers. But who is to play Bomston? Wroughton, Farren, or Frank Aikin?—Curse Bomston!—Come, Monsieur Jean Jacques, Citoyen de Genéve, this is too

broad!—Your *Julie*, unlike the *Clarissa* you affect to eulogise, or the *Calista* you affect to condemn, (though *Julia* is a half plagiarism from both;) your heroine, I say, volunteers to St. Preux, a rendezvous in her bed-chamber. Dangerous, confoundedly dangerous dramatically!—But her excuse?—That, having for a long time preserved her honour, and proved she can resist temptation, she is at last determined to lose the *former*, and to yield to the *latter*.”

“ Mem.—Remember Churchill’s story of the desperate lover of pastry, who, for a wager of two pounds, having walked from Hyde Park Corner to Cornhill, without entering one of his accustomed haunts, exultingly exclaimed, ‘ Now I have shown I can conquer my appetites, I’ll take my compensation! ’—so rushed into a confectioner’s, and devoured a third of his profits.”

This, I trust, affords a fair specimen of the folly of wasting time by *thinking* on paper. “ Go to work doggedly, young dramatist; ” is the advice of Doctor Johnson; you must, at last, *ergo*, why not at first?—But to return to *Eloisa*, which, after the irregular labour of a few months, being at length finished, my father, urged by the intreaties of my mother and aunt, prevailed on Mr. Murphy, the dramatic author, to undertake the revision of it.

This gentleman, having expressed a desire for an interview with me, I waited on him, at his chambers, in Lincoln’s-inn. I found him excessively obliging, and encouraging. He told me of the large sums, he had himself made by two of his tragedies, the *Orphan of China* and the *Grecian Daughter*, and politely hoped that I might obtain an equal remuneration for *Eloisa*. He, however, objected to the fourth act, and particularly disliked the catastrophe, adding, that he hoped, I would not, on my departure, say of him, what Pitt was then reported to have said of a great statesman, viz. that he *proposed* nothing, but *opposed* every thing.

The conversation then turning on newspapers, he asked me, whether I suffered under their attacks? I replied, that I had had no opportunity of judging, for hitherto, all I had seen had been favourable; but I did not think the reverse would make much impression on me. He then confessed that during the early part of his dramatic career, he had writhed greatly under their lash; “ but,” he added, “ I was cured for ever, through

the interposition of a blessed shower of rain, which driving me into a small coffee-house in Whitechapel, for shelter, I there saw a file of the preceding year's papers on the table, and glancing my eye over one of them, read in the first page, 'Mr. Murphy to-morrow!' Guessing, that this threat was only the prelude to a thorough punishment, I searched for the next day's paper, and there, according to my expectations, found a most outrageous attack on 'Murphy's *flimsey, linsey woolsey, Way to Keep Him.*' In the following number was a more violent abuse, if possible, on the *Pilferer's All in the Wrong*, and then another, and another for Murphy, and all the rest of his plays in succession. Now, when I reflected that that year my plays had been particularly successful at night, though by this *ultra* Churchill condemned every morning, and that the whole time, owing to no 'good natured friend,' having shown me these facetious criticisms, I had walked, talked, eaten, drunk, and slept as well as ever, I left the coffee-house in high good humour, determined for the future to 'let the gall'd jade wince; our withers are unwrung.'"

He then requested me to call again, when I should have made the alterations he had suggested, and to the correctness of which I had acceded. He advised me also to get my epilogue written by Miles Peter Andrews. In this, I hoped to succeed without much difficulty, my father having frequently met Mr. Andrews, at Wilkes's and at Garrick's.

Wilkes, the following day, introduced me to Mr. Andrews, at his house in Gower-street, when he very handsomely, immediately consented to write the epilogue; and thus commenced the intimacy between us, which only terminated with his life.

After I had made the alterations and emendations proposed by Mr. Murphy, I sent the piece again to receive Mr. Harris's decision. But, in this case, I found the little reputation I had gained by *Werter*, stand more successfully my friend, than had, previously, the powerful recommendations of Lord Effingham and of Serjeant Bolton. *ELOISA* was really received, without delay or hesitation, and was performed, for the first time, at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, on December the 20th, 1786.

Like *Werter*, *ELOISA* was met with thunders of applause; not, however, owing to either its merit or its fashion; but in

consequence of at least one hundred Westminster boys, rushing into the boxes and pit, determined, "blow calm, blow rough," to support the production of a brother Westminster. In addition to this hearty and tumultuous gang, my mother had sent our head clerk, Crouch, into the gallery, together with about fifty young sprigs of the law, to maintain a proper circulation of the applause through all parts of the house. So loyally and strenuously did the whole party exert themselves, that, on the dropping of the curtain, amidst every possible demonstration of admiration and enthusiasm, Mr. Harris took me by the hand, intending, as I imagined, to offer me the warmest congratulations on my complete success, but, in reality, to say,

"Though your tragedy will not do, my dear Fred, yet you ought to be most highly gratified; for its reception has proved, that you have more *real friends* than any other man in London."

Mr. Harris's prognostication was perfectly correct. On the third night, *Eloisa* was withdrawn, forever. Not so Miles Peter Andrews's epilogue, which met with considerable success, and was afterwards frequently spoken, by Mrs. Mattocks, at the end of "*Such things are,*" and other plays. It alluded to the usual, important *dressy* preparations on the part of the civic masters and misses, for the Lord Mayor's ball; which, that year, was stopped by the death of the Princess Amelia. The line which used to excite the shouts, as much of mischief, perhaps, as of merriment, was,

"Down came the order to suspend the ball!"

The third night of *Eloisa* was reserved for the author's benefit. At that time, the usual charge for the expenses of the house was one hundred pounds. As soon as the play had terminated, unable longer to restrain my anxiety, I rushed into the treasury, to learn the extent of my profits. After waiting a considerable time, I was informed with all due solemnity, that the total receipt of the house was one hundred and eight pounds; exactly, *eight pounds* more than the charge; which, being deducted, I pocketed the overplus, and withdrew from the treasury, somewhat doubtful whether I should consider the drama, a good, or a bad profession.

On my return into the front of the house, I there saw (for the first time, *off* the stage) the celebrated Charles Macklin,—that astonishing old man, who was even then, I should conceive, nearly ninety years of age. He was in conversation with the late Mr. White, one of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, who introduced me to the veteran, as the successful author of *Werter*, and of *Eloisa*.

“Successful, indeed, Sir!” said I, at the same time producing the receipt. “For see, I have gained exactly *eight pounds*, by two tragedies!”

“And very good pay too, Sir,” gruffly replied my orthodox patriarch. “So go home, and write two more tragedies, and if you gain four pounds by each of them, why, young man, the author of *Paradise Lost* will be a *fool* to you.”

I think I need not add that I never again applied to this modern Aretin, to sympathize with me in any deficiency in my theatrical remunerations.

When I returned home, and showed the receipt to the family, my father said, that it was quite adequate to my deserts, and hoped I should now finally abandon so ridiculous a profession. My mother and my aunt were considerably disappointed; but Jack, who had lost money by his flight to Parnassus, and Dick, who had never received a single brief, since he had been called to the bar, considered eight pounds by no means a contemptible remuneration. Both therefore cheered and encouraged me, exclaiming,

“Never mind, Fred, it is a very fine profession.”

Whether this proved to be the case will be seen hereafter. Thus commenced, and thus terminated, my brief tragic career.

CHAPTER IX.

FAMILY DISTRESS, AND CONSEQUENT TOUR TO SWITZER-
LAND.

“ Thus, while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
 With looks demure, and silent pace, a DUX,
 Horrible monster, hated by gods and men,
 To my xtrial citadel ascends!”

PHILLIPS.

My father, owing to the kind assistance he had received from several of his old friends, particularly from Mr. Halliday, the banker, and Mr. Jeffries, a leading merchant in the city, had managed to continue a doubtful struggle with his pecuniary difficulties, until the present period, the commencement of the year 1787. In addition, however, to his own private debts, he now began to suffer more and more from the losses he had sustained by Sayre's misfortunes, and by the ruinous state of his property in Dominica.

Yet, though my father saw the crisis of his affairs now rapidly approaching, and felt conscious that all his old efforts would be vainly employed to delay it for another six months, he never once lost either his courage or his spirits. I well remember that when any of us desponded, he would say, “Something must be done!”—or when, after the loud, threatening, single knock, (of which we had generally eight or ten every day) the servant entered with the usual message, that “another man was below insisting on payment,” my father would invariably reply with the greatest coolness,

“ If you can say any thing pleasant, Sir, do—if not, leave the room.”

My mother, at this period, absolutely wanting a few pounds

to settle the common current expenses of the house, applied to my father. But he only shook his head and muttered,

“ Where, where am I to get them?”

“ Oh,” my mother replied, “ for so small a sum, I really think you need not scruple to ask Lord Effingham.”

“ Nonsense!” answered my father, “ ask Lord Effingham for ten or twenty pounds—tease him about trifles! no.” And, before my mother had had time to express her wonder, at this sudden influx of independent feeling, he added, smiling, “ Perhaps I shall pay his Lordship the compliment of reserving him for a *great occasion*.

About a month after this conversation, returning one Saturday night from Sadler’s Wells, the street door, to my great surprise, was opened by old faithful nurse Morgan, who, having lived with us above thirty years, and having always proved herself one of the most faithful and disinterested of human beings, was then regarded by the family, less as a servant than as a friend. Seizing my hand, and bursting into tears, the affectionate creature informed me, that one of my father’s creditors, having issued a writ of execution, bailiffs were at that very moment in the house; and that my poor mother was alone in her bed-room, awaiting in extreme anxiety, my return, as my father, and all the rest of the family, were at Southbarrow.

I immediately rushed up stairs, and in her room found my mother; who, being totally incapable of raising even ten pounds, towards the payment of a debt of upwards of three hundred pounds, I saw no chance of ridding the house of our troublesome visitors, and began to lament the necessity of passing the whole of Sunday with them. To this, nurse rejoined, and truly rejoined, that, if in my mother’s shattered state of health, this latter circumstance happened to her, it might be productive of the most fatal results; and advised me, therefore, to go immediately to Mr. Armstrong’s, the officer, in Cary-street, state the afflicting case, and throw myself on his generosity.

I luckily found Armstrong at home, and he having, on several occasions, received obligations from my father, and having no fear of losing his money, by waiting till the following Monday, granted my request without hesitation, and gave me a short note to his followers; which presenting to them on my return, they walked out of the house as I walked into it.

My poor mother and Morgan wept from joy; and after jointly moralizing on the world's vicissitudes, on the folly of procrastination, and on the merit of surmounting pecuniary difficulties by industry, and prompt retrenchment, we all parted for the night, old nurse vowing, that if nobody else would assume the office of adviser, she herself would shortly speak her mind to my father.

On the Monday, the family returned, and my father, vociferating about liberty, and an Englishman's house being his castle, &c. wondered, that whilst there remained a poker amongst the furniture, I, or any body, had permitted so outrageous an invasion. During his highest flight, a messenger arrived from Armstrong; immediately restored to his senses, and the common place of life, my father borrowed the three hundred pounds of Mr. Jefferies, and the debt was discharged. Not so, however, other debts and other costs; his difficulties daily increased; yet, still my father did not, or would not, see his danger, continually evading all remonstances by the usual phrases, "*Carpe diem*"—"Banish sorrow till to-morrow," and "*Am I the first man who lost thousands?*" usually tagging these dangerous maxims, with "*Come, you must keep up your spirits, boys—Jack, ring the bell, and order another bottle of Madeira.*"

Faithful old Morgan, who, as before stated, was replete with the necessity of immediately commencing the economical system, one day, on the additional Madeira being ordered, rushed into the room, full of real *heart*, but also of wild Welch passion, and, to our utter surprise, openly remonstrated with my father on his imprudence. She implored him, for his own sake, if not for ours, to commence an immediate diminution of his expenses, and to meet his present difficulties, by living within his income. "*You are not comfortable now,*" she added, "*I know you are not. Try then the wise and prudent plan; you will be directly better satisfied with yourself, and in the end you will satisfy every body, and I shall live to see you all once more happy!*"

My father replied in his usual style—

"*If you can say any thing pleasant, do—if not, you had better quit the room. Jack, ring again for the Madeira.*"

"*You will have it then, Sir?*"

My father returned a commanding nod.

"There is the key then, Sir," rejoined Morgan, "but *another* must fetch what you require; I have shared in your prosperity for more than thirty years, so I will not be necessary to your ruin, nor to the ruin of my mistress, nor to that of these dear boys, all of whom I have nursed, and love as dearly as my own. You may get another housekeeper, Sir, far more useful, but, never will you find one half so attached to you; and though from this hour I do not expect to see any of you again, I say—God for ever bless you all!"

Then, her eyes streaming with tears, and almost fainting under extreme agitation, the kind, affectionate creature, tottered from the room.

I do not know how my father looked, or how my brothers looked, but I know, that when I was able to cast my eyes around, the key remained untouched on the spot where old nurse had placed it. At length my father arose, and exclaimed—

"Excellent old creature, she is right, and I consider myself personally wronged by the family, not one of whom has had either the courage or the candour to speak fairly and boldly to me before."

My father then followed, thanked her, and instead of quitting the family, she remained in it till the day of her death; an event, which did not occur till nearly three and twenty years afterwards.

The long talked of retrenchment, now actually commenced; but, was suddenly checked, after a few weeks continuance, by the announcement of the death of Mr. C. Purdon, in the daily papers.

My father, having insured this gentleman's life for five thousand pounds, and having, amidst all difficulties, contrived to pay regularly on the policy, now felt secure of receiving a large ready money supply, and being thereby enabled, to use his own phrase, "to find time to turn himself about."

The next day, therefore, he sent to the Insurance Office for the money; when, as usual, they demanded the burial certificate. Of this, my father in his hurry, had not thought; but he replied, that it should be immediately procured, and forwarded to them, as Mr. Purdon had died at Paddington. Thither I was sent; but, neither there, nor in several other places, where we were induced by reports to make inquiry, could we

succeed in gaining the slightest intelligence, concerning either his death, or his burial.

While we were all in this distressed state, feeling as if this large sum (of which a few days before we had deemed ourselves perfectly secure) was now totally lost to us for ever, we heard that it was currently reported among his friends, that Mr. Purdon had been accidentally drowned in the Thames. But where? In what part? My father, therefore, catching at a straw, had a part of the Thames dragged, but without the slightest success. The usual mode of discovering burial as well as baptismal registers, was then immediately adopted—but not any information was received.

At length, when further search or inquiry appeared hopeless of success, we were informed, with a great degree of certainty, that Mr. Purdon died in some part of France, and that a Mr. Newell, an Englishman residing at Paris, knew the exact spot where he was interred; but even if we failed in receiving satisfactory information from this gentleman, we should be sure of obtaining it from Sir Francis Vincent, then residing at Berne, and an intimate friend of the deceased.

On these data, my father was determined speedily to act. “The foreign post, said he, “is both slow and uncertain—expedition must be our motto—so, as you, Fred, so well executed your last continental mission, I must employ you on the present one. Be brisk, therefore, pack up this evening, and start to-morrow.”

My aunt, who had long been most anxious to visit the Continent, and “see its sights,” requested that she might be permitted to accompany me; and nobody opposing her, we started together from Southbarrow, in an old post-chaise of my father’s, on a

TOUR THROUGH
FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, AND SAVOY,
IN
1787.

But, before I commence an account of it, as I hope we are to travel in company, it will be necessary to make my reader, (my fair one, especially,) acquainted with the person of my

aunt. She was then about thirty years of age, of a gay, cheerful disposition, and though not *decidedly* beautiful, was a most interesting *brunette*. She dressed well, talked well, and though our bill on Perigord the banker, was on the small scale, yet, like my father, always taking the bright side, she determined to make the most of it.

With these intentions, on our arrival at Paris, for I will not dwell a second time on the hacknied intermediate space, we drove to one of the first hotels in the city, the Hotel d'York.

Here, at night, I stepped from a cold, poverty stricken, naked brick floor, into a lofty canopied bed, decorated with hangings of crimson satin, superb ornaments, and mouldings of gold, and brilliant looking-glasses, the whole displaying the French taste, in two words—"splendid discomfort," or, as Tighe says, "gilt, and bemired."

After breakfast, we proceeded to execute our mission, and asked the waiter whether he knew where a Mr. Newell lived. He could not inform us, but added, that by making inquiry, at the *restaurateurs* frequented by the English, he should easily be enabled to learn the gentleman's direction. Desiring him to lose no time, and promising him an *ecu*, if he procured it by the dinner hour, I and my aunt quitted the hotel, to view the Parisian lions.

On our return, our messenger exultingly informed us, that he had not only discovered the gentleman's abode, but seen the gentleman himself; by whom he was desired to say, that he would have the pleasure of waiting on us, during the course of the evening. We cheerfully gave our informer his promised reward; and having commenced our dinner, awaited in the utmost impatience and anxiety, the arrival of the important and obliging stranger.

The door opened, and he appeared. He was not a particularly handsome man, though youthful, and of a most prepossessing appearance.

"Take a glass of wine, Sir," I exclaimed, at the same time, filling one, and offering it to him.

"Your health, Sir, and that lady's," he replied, bowing politely to my lively relative, with an expression of sudden interest.

True to the attributes of her sex, my fair companion quickly discovered the impression she had made.

“Pray—” she said, and after a short pause, added, “have you long left England?”

“Only a year, Madam,” he rejoined; “but it has appeared to me a very, very long one; for, I derive neither gratification nor amusement from the generality of French society.”

“Then you wish, Sir, to return to your native land?”

“O that I could, Madam,” he replied, “but if circumstances did not——” he stopped, and sighing, finished his glass.

Seeing that the original subject was completely lost in this extraneous matter, (a case of too frequent occurrence, both in public and private controversy) and, that nobody seemed inclined to recur to it, after another short pause, without preface, I brought it at once on the tapis.

“We are sorry, Mr. Newell, extremely sorry to trouble you, but the fact is——”

He stared, and seemed about to speak. After a momentary pause, I resumed my conversation.

“My father, Mr. Newell, having insured Mr. Purdon’s life, for a considerable sum, and being positively informed that he died in France, and that you know the exact spot where he was buried, I ——”

“I, Sir!” he answered, in utter astonishment.

“Yes, Mr. Newell, and as we came from London, wholly for the purpose of receiving from you information so essential to the interest of our family, I hope ——”

Rising abruptly, he said,

“Sir,” in the first place, my name is not Newell, but *Nowell*; in the second place, of the very existence of the gentleman you have mentioned, I was in total ignorance, until the present moment; and, in the third place, I am a member of the medical profession, who being informed by your servant, that my attendance was immediately required, at the Hotel d’York, I told him, that I would follow him, the moment I had dismissed the patients then present, and accordingly hastened hither, expecting, it is true, to be examined concerning a dying case, though certainly not, as to a *dead* one. But, as I suspect, from his excessive alacrity and eagerness, that you promised your messenger a reward, in the event of his success, my only wonder now is, that he should ever have taken the trouble to discover a name, so similar to *Newell*, as mine.”

Though, as may be safely supposed, our disappointment on

hearing this speech was by no means inconsiderable, yet, it was greatly augmented, when he informed us, that he did not think there was any person resident in Paris, of the name we sought. However, he added that he would make every possible inquiry, and let us know the result on the following morning.

As he took his leave of my fellow traveller, they "both looked unutterable things;" I then returned him my thanks for his politeness, and with a low bow, he quitted the room.

The consequence of this interview was, that though we gained by it no news of the right gentleman, Mr. *Newell*, we commenced, and continued, during our short stay at Paris, an intimacy with the *wrong* gentleman, Mr. *Nowell*.

In the evening, my aunt and I proceeded to the Opera, where we saw Beaumarchais' *Folle Journée*, acted for the hundredth time. Molé, though then sixty, looked and performed the *Count* admirably; and the delightful impression made upon my mind, by the acting of Contat in *Susanne*, can never be effaced. She combined, with the ease and elegance of the present Countess of Derby, all the rich, natural humour of Mrs. Jordan:—

"The force of nature could no further go,
To make a third, she join'd the former two."

The next night we visited the Théâtre Italien, and saw Dugazon perform *Matilda*, in *Richard Cœur de Lion*; and so potent were the effects produced by her singing and acting, that I know not whether Gretry or Sedaine, was most indebted to this fascinating actress.

Of the French tragedians I can say scarcely anything, having only once witnessed their performance; when, during the whole evening, with the exception of their *outré* acting, the only circumstance which struck me, as in the least remarkable, was that, at the close of one of the longest and most insipid speeches, (which, in my opinion, was declaimed even more prosingly and insipidly, than it was written) I saw the hands and eyes of more than half the pit, raised towards the ceiling, and heard them exclaim, in a tone of enthusiastic ecstasy—

"C'est magnifique!—c'est trop!—c'est!—Oh ciel!"

Mr. *Nowell*, (who had been for some time medical adviser

to the deputy governor of the Bastile, and on terms of intimacy with him,) being required to attend him during the course of the following day, persuaded us to accompany him. The exterior of this formidable fortress and prison, was so hideous and appalling that I almost felt, as I passed over the draw-bridge, I beheld the light of day for the last time. As we advanced, our awe increased; till, at last, expecting not only to hear the groans of the dying, but to see the spectres of the dead, we were agreeably surprised, on entering the court-yard, to find all completely silent and calm.

Though we were not allowed to see much of the interior, (and, in course, not one of the state prisoners,) the deputy-governor, a most polite, obliging and apparently a most humane man, politely conducted us into the chamber, where the celebrated personage with the *Iron Mask* had been confined for so many years. Here we were much interested by an examination of the very chair on which this unfortunate victim, and reputed twin-brother of Louis the Fourteenth, used constantly to sit; as also by the various characters and signs scratched or drawn by him, on the wall, for the purpose of amusement, or of preserving a calculation of the duration of his miserable captivity.

We also saw among other apartments, those in which Voltaire and Marmontel had been confined. Mine and my aunt's curiosity and questions to the deputy-governor, on these and other subjects, were endless. Confidentially, who really was the man with the *iron mask*? If *Monsieur* did not know, the governor, the Marquis de Launay must? How many prisoners had been put to the torture since he had been in office?—and how many had been starved?—and how many had been strangled?—and how many were at this moment in this horrid abyss?

The deputy-governor shook his head, and continued silent; but, after a short apology from Mr. Nowell, for our want of reflection, he smiled and replied—

“ I see you think, as half France thinks, that hundreds of state prisoners are now immured within our loathsome dungeons, not only suffering from the loss of liberty, but from the additional horrors of torture and starvation. However, the fact is, that M. de Launay has, at this moment, only *eight* prisoners under his care; and if you could ask them how they

are treated, they would tell you, that they had food, fire, and were well lodged; also, permission daily to enjoy an hour's air and exercise on the ramparts; and, finally, so anxious is the governor to soften their lots, that they are convinced he suffers to see them suffer."

When it is recollected, that this statement was made but two years previously to the 14th of July, 1789; when the Bastile was demolished by the ferocious perseverance and courage of a revolutionary mob, who only discovered *five* prisoners, there can be but little doubt of its veracity. But, as a further corroboration of the lieutenant-governor's testimony, it is only necessary to refer to the registers of the Bastile, published in 1789, by the *rebels themselves*; where it is stated that only *three hundred* prisoners had been confined in that gloomy abode, during the lapse of *three centuries*; whereas, during eighteen months of Robespierre's reign, two hundred and fifty thousand families were enclosed in state prisons. It may also be added, that before the expiration of the first five years of Buonaparte's government, the Temple alone had contained *nine thousand five hundred* prisoners of both sexes.*

“ VIVE LA LIBERTE! ”

On the following evening I saw Diderot's *Pere de Famille* performed on an entirely novel plan. The dialogue was given by actors behind the scenes; while those on the stage, by corresponding gestures, endeavoured to pass themselves for the real speakers. The effect was singular, but by no means either satisfactory or pleasing. The same attempt, it will be remembered, was lately made in a London theatre, and was equally unsuccessful.

After passing ten days at Paris, running the usual rounds, and pursuing pleasure so rapidly, that “ panting time toiled after us in vain,” we began to turn our thoughts towards Sir Francis Vincent, and towards Berne.

Early in the morning, therefore, of July the 14th, after a tender parting between my aunt and Mr. Nowell, who only consoled themselves with the hope of a speedy re-union in Paris, we started for Switzerland, and chose the Dijon road. The real cause of this unusual choice was, that being still en-

* *Les nouvelles à la main, Primaire, An. XIII.*

amoured of the name of *Eloisa*, and having made eight pounds by Rousseau's, I thought, as a man of common gallantry, I could do no less than employ them in the attempt to gain a sight of the tomb of the real *Eloisa*, by a *pilgrimage to the Paraclet*.

The first night we slept at Provins, a town, that the landlord of our hotel informed us, was not only famous for its excellent roses, (of which they made a delicious perfume and preserve,) but for other curiosities, all equally extraordinary and interesting.

However, thank fortune, we had arrived too late, and left Provins too early, to be dragged about to see either dull churches, ruined castles, mines, mountains and manufactories, or remains of *ancient Rome*, fabricated in *modern France*. But, unfortunately my companion was of a very different opinion, and was so fond of sights, that, on our arrival (sometime afterwards) at Lyons, dreading that she would delay all further progress, till she had seen those far-famed wonders, the cathedral's clock and Marc Antony's aqueduct, I induced the waiter, by a bribe, to assure her that the former had been *stolen* and the latter *washed* away.

Leaving Provins at four o'clock the following morning, we arrived at Nogent-sur-Seine, shortly after five. "Here we are!" quoth I, triumphantly; and immediately ordered post horses for the Paraclet. The postillion stared, hesitated, and then replied, that the next regular stage was Granges. "*À la bonne heure*," I replied, "regular stages for regular travellers —*my next stage is the Paraclet*." The man shook his head and then walked away, adding, that I had better see his master before I proceeded.

But impatient, *Eloisa* mad, I could not endure even momentary delay; so, descending from the carriage, and rapidly mounting the stairs of the inn, I soon found myself by the landlord's bed-side. Shaking the unfortunate sleeper (who would have slept with the seven Arabians and their dog for a wager) rather roughly, he at length awakened and rubbing his great eyes, and opening his wide mouth to an awful extent, in half-a-dozen yawns, he exclaimed—

"*Diable! qu'est ce que vous voulez donc?*"—and then added, after a deliberate examination of me from head to foot, "*Monsieur?*"

"Horses directly for the Paraclet," I replied.

“ Eh bien!—mais pourquoi?—Madame l’ Abbesse ne vous permettra pas même de passer les portes du couvent—non, jamais.”

“ That is my affair, *mon ami*,” I replied; “ but if you will put *on* your horses to my carriage, I will put *on* something to your regular charge, which shall more than sufficiently compensate to you, for the *irregularity* of their destination.

“ Finisson, finissons, vous avez raison partout, Milord, said my accordant postmaster, hastily throwing on a large half military cloak, and descending.

My *sop* having completely tamed my *Cerberus*, the whole transaction was speedily closed; and after a half hour’s drive, we approached the wood, where Abelard is reported to have first taken up his abode, when he quitted the monastery of St. Denis, in which place he had long been detained against his consent. His life being threatened, he fled into Champagne; and on the death of the abbot of St. Denis, his principal persecutor, he obtained permission to live monastically where he pleased. Accordingly, he built in this forest a small oratory, which he called the Paraclet.

Eloisa says, that, when Abelard first arrived there, the forest was only the resort of banditti and wild beasts; but, when it was once known that Abelard was again free, so many lovers of science followed him, that, before the end of the first year, the number of his scholars exceeded six hundred; none of whom feared to expose themselves to the inclemency of the weather, without other shelter than wretched huts, or other food than roots and water, provided that they might enjoy the benefit of the lectures of this famous professor.

As the learned colony increased, both in wealth and numbers, they became dissatisfied with the humble oratory Abelard had raised, and built a huge edifice of wood and stone, that they named after the Paraclet, the Holy Virgin.

Thus was originally erected this celebrated convent, which Abelard, after a lapse of some years gave to Eloisa, with the accordance of Pope Innocent the Second. Abelard then retired to Cluni, and in the year 1142, died at St. Marcellus, a priory dependent on the Abbey of Cluni. Eloisa, when the violence of her grief had abated, requested permission to have his body removed to the Paraclet: which was not only granted, but the Abbot himself accompanied it thither. The nuns

being assembled in the chapel, with Eloisa at their head, the service commenced, and when terminated, the body was raised from the bier, and conveyed to the vault. The venerable Abbot of Cluni having pronounced the supplication for the soul of the departed, dust was thrown upon the grave, and the tomb closed on Abelard, forever.

But, to my pilgrimage. Leaving the wood, we entered an open country, somewhat resembling the Dorsetshire Downs, which not extending above a mile, at its termination we ascended a small hill, and from its summit beheld the long desired spectacle.

The Paraclet lay before us. Its lofty spire, gothic towers, high conventional walls, and gate, certainly gave it a grand monastic appearance; though its surrounding domain consisting of above two hundred well cultivated acres, its fine large walled garden, well stocked, stack-yard, barn, dairy, cattle and all other agricultural appurtenances, made the whole bear a greater resemblance to a chateau, than to my idea of an ancient and celebrated convent. The first glance, however, served to prove that the whole of Pope's fine description of it was ideal; for, there were neither "rugged rocks, nor falling floods."

Shortly after run-rise, stopping on the lawn, before the great gate, opening into a quadrangular court, we ordered the post-boy to ring the porter's bell. He obeyed, and had I been in a besieged town, and aroused from a profound sleep by the sound of the alarm, I could not have been much more agitated. I felt as if this were *really* "the most awful moment of my life;" and casting a glance on my fair companion, I discovered that her countenance expressed an almost equal share of curiosity and anxiety.

The gates, "those lovely gates," at length opened; and an old porter, clad in the monastic habit, and apparently almost as much terrified as ourselves, (though from a different motive,) with considerable hesitation advanced towards the carriage.

When at a moderate distance, in a tremulous tone, he inquired what could be our business at so early an hour.

We answered, as may be supposed, in a corresponding tone, that, having travelled all the way from England, chiefly for the purpose of visiting the tomb of *Eloisa*, we hoped that the Abbess would grant to us her permission to enter.

“*C'est impossible, Monsieur,*” he replied, and tottering, he proceeded to return towards the gates; but, springing from the carriage, I gently detained him; then, having hastily written a few explanatory, or probably confusing, lines (as they were no doubt in bad French,) on the back of a card, I implored him to deliver it to the Abbess.

After much hesitation, he at length consented, but left us with a look, which did not promise much prospect of success; and made me fear that I should, after all exertions, be compelled to return to England with no other reward, than that of being able to boast, that I had *left my card* at the Paraclet.

After a few minutes of dreadful suspense, he returned, beckoned the postboy, threw open the gates, and we drove triumphantly into the quadrangle of the Paraclet!

I was so absorbed in ecstasy, that I recollect nothing which occurred, until I found myself, with my companion leaning on my arm in a parlour, hung with gloomy tapestry, and decorated with a half-length portrait of a beautiful female, and two prints of Abelard and Eloisa, engraved after Angelica Kauffman, by Bartolozzi.

The door opened, and the Abbess, the Comtesse de Roucy, of the house of Montmorency, entered the room.* She was attired, according to the rules of the order of Benedictines, (to which the Abbey belonged) in black, with the cross, rosary, and a scarlet stole, reaching from her neck to her feet. She seemed about thirty years of age, and could fairly boast of possessing that assemblage of graces which result from a fine form, a handsome countenance, and a majestic manner.

She desired us to be seated; and then asked whether we

* The Abbesses of this convent were usually selected from among the first and most ancient families in France. There is a catalogue of them from the first foundation of the Abbey in 1130, down to the year 1615, in Andrew du Chesne's History of the Misfortunes of Abelard. But, according to Bayle, a curious circumstance is omitted in it, which is, that towards the close of the seventeenth century, a Protestant Abbess was permitted to continue for a time at the head of the *Paraclet*. This name, as has been stated, originated with Abelard, but was perpetuated by Eloisa, who supported the propriety of the appellation, against those who asserted that it was not lawful to consecrate churches to the Holy Spirit. It was in commemoration of Eloisa's knowledge of Greek, that the nuns of the Paraclet were compelled by their rules to perform the service, once every year, in that language.

had literally travelled all the way from England, merely to visit the tomb of Eloisa. Fearful of receiving my *congratulations*, if I abated a jot of my pretensions to admittance, I replied in the affirmative. The conversation proceeded, during which, gradually gathering resolution, I ventured to allude to the Tragedy. The Abbess smiled, and pointing to the picture, said,

“There is an original picture of your heroine.”

I gazed on it with rapture, and inquired whether it were not esteemed a very fine resemblance?

“I believe that it is so considered,” replied the Abbess, with some surprise; “but, is not *Eloisa*, even more beautiful than Mr. Pope’s poem has induced the most enthusiastic of you English to imagine her?”

By this time, the living Abbess had, imperceptibly made such havoc with the dead Abbess, in the estimation of my youthful fickle tendencies, that I declined answering, hesitated, and looked away.

At this moment, a little girl, and as we were afterwards informed, a niece of Madame de Roucy, entered followed by the porter, who bore in his hand a large bunch of keys.

“Come,” said the Abbess, “and I will lead you through the cloisters to the Chapel;—a place, to which, during my Abbiciate, only two strangers have been admitted, and each, with the same passport as your own,—the name of an Englishman.”

The porter now unlocking the gate that communicated with the interior; we entered the cloisters, and were about to ascend the steps which led to the Chapel, when the Abbess, suddenly pausing, stopped, and thus addressed us,

“I hope you will not resemble my last English visitor, and express a vehement dissatisfaction, because, I can only show you the tomb, and not the *bodies*, of these celebrated lovers.”

All reply was totally prevented, by the awe, delight, astonishment and gratitude, with which I was seized, on entering the Chapel. It was a fine, handsome structure, in the Gothic style of architecture, with a nave, and side aisles, resembling, in many respects, our magnificent, and unique specimen of its kind, Henry the Seventh’s Chapel.

The first object which attracted my attention, was a young nun, kneeling before the altar. Such was the ardour and devotion of this enthusiast, that, though almost in contact with

beings of the world, and these beings, English, (to her *rare* eyes, whose strange language, and dress alone, would have excited the most dormant curiosity in social life) yet, during the whole time we remained there, she literally never cast one worldly lingering look around; "So sweet is zealous contemplation."

The next object which attracted our observation, was the tomb of the late Abbess, aunt to the Duke of Rochefoucauld, and sister to the Cardinal. Madame de Roucy informed us, that her predecessor was an Englishwoman, descended from the Stafford and Lifford families; and was proceeding in her relation, when suddenly turning my eye to the left, I discovered a large lamp, burning over a handsome black marble slab, surrounded by a gilt railing.

Filled with imaginary and real admiration, I exclaimed, in a voice, half interrogative, half decisive, "*Eloisa!*" The Abbess inclining her head, assented; and then, my pre-determined enthusiasm, so rapidly increased, that though, like the worshippers of Thomas à Becket, and other saints, I did not exactly fall on my knees, I could scarcely retain the perpendicular position. Again, and again, I read the Latin epitaph, engraved on the tomb, till the whole was impressed on my recollection. The following, is nearly a literal translation—

HERE, AND
UNDER THE SAME STONE, REPOSE
PETER ABELARD, THE FOUNDER,
AND HELOISA, THE FIRST ABBESS,
OF THIS MONASTERY.

ALIKE IN DISPOSITION, AND IN LOVE,
THEY WERE ONCE UNITED IN THE SAME PURSUITS,
THE SAME FATAL MARRIAGE, AND THE SAME REPENTANCE;
AND NOW IN ETERNAL HAPPINESS,
WE TRUST THEY ARE NOT DIVIDED.

PETER ABELARD,
DIED,
ON THE TWENTY-FIRST OF APRIL,
ONE THOUSAND, ONE HUNDRED, AND FORTY-TWO,
HELOISA,
THE SEVENTEENTH OF MAY,
ONE THOUSAND, ONE HUNDRED, AND SIXTY-THREE.

I gazed and gazed, till I almost fancied I saw the black marble yawn, and *Eloisa* in her shroud, ascend from her sepulchre; and at the same time, as if supernatural agency had already commenced its operation on me, I felt that an imperceptible, and mysterious power, was gradually drawing me towards the tomb. At this moment, to my surprise, and to the utter dispersion of my ghostly illusions, the Abbess said, in a commanding tone, “*Be quiet, Nannette!*”

Directing my attention towards the cause of the reproof, I discovered, that the Abbess’s little niece had united the strings which attached my leather breeches to my knee, and was gently drawing me towards her, as she played with them; thus causing all my sensations of supernatural attraction. Here, was the “*ludere cum sacris*,” in the fullest extent of its signification, and the strong, opposing contrast between the devout nun, and the sportive niece, the marble monument, and my leather habiliments, inclined me to imitate Du Sart’s boor, and cry with one eye, while I laughed with the other.

The convent bell ringing for matins, we were requested to return into the parlour, where the Abbess was again most communicative, and obliging.

“The Englishman,” she said, “who presented me with those engravings, after Angelica Kauffman, asked whether it were not a positive fact, that, when the vault was opened to receive the body of *Floisa*, her husband, Abelard did not arise, *publicly embrace her*, and then again *lie down*.* Pray,” she

* Bayle says, “this is nothing, for there are many instances recorded of similar cases; and then with the utmost *naïveté*, proceeds, ex. gra. to repeat, what Gregorius Turonensis relates concerning two married persons, who always remained virgins, and whom the inhabitants of the country, ycleped “The two Lovers!” The wife died first. The husband, during her interment, said with enthusiasm, “I thank Heaven! that I have returned this treasure, in the same state of virgin purity, in which it was graciously committed to me.”

The dead wife hearing this thanksgiving, raised herself, and smiling with a sweet expression, exclaimed—

“Why dost thou, love, boast of a thing that was *not required of thee*?”

“The husband died a little after, and was buried over against his spouse; but on the morrow, they were *both found in the same grave!*” Bayle then concludes with this learned decision: “That it is not *thus*, the *depositum* should have been *preserved*, it was not *restoring* it *well*, to *render* it as it was *received*.”

continued, "am I to be allowed to infer from the few specimens I have beheld, that your whole nation is remarkable for credulity? You must not be offended, for you may remember, my specimens are only *three*. The first, was mad enough to expect to see the *bodies* of Abelard and Eloisa, after they had been buried above five hundred years; the second, was mad enough to expect that I would confirm the veracity of a false miracle; and—"

"And the third," interrupted I, hastily, "was more mad than either of the preceding; for, he selected as the heroine of his tragedy, the deceased Abbess, when the living one, as far surpasses her, as"—Here I was stopped short in my rhapsodical flight, by a look from its object, expressing her conviction, that I was not, certainly, the *least insane* of the *three*.

At length, involuntarily forced to perceive that we detained her from her duties, I slowly arose, and said, "That on our return from Switzerland, I hoped Madame would allow us the pleasure of seeing her again" She curtsied, made no reply, and quitted the room, bestowing on us, however, a look, so interesting and so benignant, that it increased, rather than assuaged my delirium.

Thus ended my trip to the Paraclet; and unlike other trips, not altogether in *eternal hope* and *perpetual disappointment*.

Having departed from the regular track, we travelled seventy-two miles, over wretched cross roads, without either rest or refreshment; for though we did not again find post-masters, either curious or scrupulous, concerning the destination of their horses, we found many who only offered us a kind of horrid black bread, that served as principal provender, for both themselves and their animals. Preferring to this even the *ameleon's food*, we urged the postboys to their greatest speed, which being by no means immoderate, we did not enter Dijon, till nearly eight in the evening; when we were more than half dead with hunger and fatigue.

The next night we reached Dole; and the following evening arrived at the foot of the Jura mountains; where the post-master compelled us to add another pair of horses to our carriage. In spite, however, of the addition, partly owing to the regular and rather steep ascent, but, principally owing to the laziness and badness of our drivers and cattle, by one o'clock in the morning, we had not proceeded nine miles.

My fellow traveller became so exhausted by the continued fatigue, that I was compelled to inquire of the post-boy, whether there were no place near, where we might receive even a temporary relief. He replied, that there was an excellent one within a quarter of a mile of the road; and immediately drove us to a convent. Ringing the bell, a monk, of a most humane and venerable appearance, advanced, and literally almost supplied our wants, before we could name them; so stored was he, "with the milk of human kindness." He presented us with a bottle of old Burgundy, a horn cup, and a small basket of excellent sweet biscuits. Then giving us his benediction, this real professor of charity departed, positively refusing the smallest pecuniary remuneration.

Now, without being personal, there *are* countries, where, if two strangers, at one o'clock in the morning, rang the bell of a lonely country house, to request refreshment, instead of obtaining it, they would, *perhaps*, be dismissed with contempt, or detained all night as disturbers of the public peace.

We continued our slow and tiresome ascent, till exhausted, and doubtful whether we should ever reach the summit, from very dole we at last fell asleep. But we were shortly afterwards awakened by the post-boy, loudly tapping the window. Rubbing our eyes and yawning, we proceeded harshly to inquire into the cause of this sudden disturbance; when our disturber terminated our chagrin as quickly as it had commenced, exultingly exclaiming, as he pointed to the prospect before us, "*Voila!*"

We had, at length, reach the summit of the hill, up which we had been so long toiling. It was then about five o'clock on a delightful July morning, and the sun had already risen. The Lake of Geneva glittering beneath us, over all its vast expanse of waters; the snow capt Alps, Glacières, and the giant-like Mont Blanc in the south; and the picturesque white cottages, fertile pasturage, lofty woods and splendid vallies, displayed altogether such transcendent natural beauty, that, though, as may have been observed, I was far from being a *scenery hunter*, all cockney feeling immediately vanished, and left me so filled with pleasure and admiration, that, for a few moments, I stood enchanted and entranced, almost believing myself in Fairy Land.

Descending the Jura mountains, somewhat more quickly

than we ascended them, we soon reached the Hotel d'Angleterre, seated on the very shore of the Lake. Our finances, being in no very flourishing condition, owing to our expenses at Paris, before we alighted from our English post-chaise, we began to treat with Dejean, the landlord, for the sale of it. As Sterne says, "It must needs be a hostile kind of a world, when the buyer (or seller) though only of a sorry post-chaise, views his conventionist with the same sort of eye, as if he was going along with him to Hyde Park Corner, to fight a duel. For my own part," (continues Sterne) "being but a poor swordsman, and no way a match for Monsieur, I felt the rotation of all the movements within me, incident to my situation. I looked at Monsieur, through and through—eyed him as he walked along in profile—then, *en face*—thought he looked like a Jew—then a Turk—disliked his wig—cursed him by my gods—wished him at the devil:"—Such, for a time, were my feelings as to Dejean; but I suddenly acknowledged my error, and vowed he looked like an angel, while he offered me seventy louis, for my English post-chaise.

I accepted the proposal, and immediately pocketed the money; evidently no bad bargain, as in London, Hatchett and other coach-makers, had refused to give forty pounds for it, and as I should very much suspect, that, unlike its master, the value and importance of my old friend, were not increased, either by its visit to the Paraclet, or its travels among rocky and picturesque mountains.

During breakfast, we were attended by an English waiter, a smart lad, about eighteen, and nearly as theatrically mad as myself. He told us, that he was related to an old retired comic actor on the London stages, named Phil. Harvey. This man being naturally of a melancholy disposition, after he had retired from the stage, acquired a habit of weeping and groaning, which he carried to such an extent, that when reminded by a friend, with intent to console him, that the Duke of Devonshire still allowed him two shillings and sixpence per day, he burst into a paroxysm of grief, and cried—

"His Grace might as well make it *three shillings*. Oh, oh, oh!"

Asking the waiter whether he liked Switzerland, its scenery, and its people, he replied,

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“ Not at all, Sir; and amongst other reasons, because there is but one theatre in the whole thirteen dull Cantons, and even *that*, a very small shabby one, is never allowed to be open more than three months in the year. Then, Sir, as to Swiss scenery, pooh! why the Alps, Mont Blanc and the Glacières, are always the same; but when I saw them at Drury Lane, in the last new pantomime, they not only looked better at first sight, but when Harlequin in a twinkling changed them into the Adam and Eve tea-gardens, with playing grounds for *skittles* and *bumble puppy!*—Oh! capital!—Sir, there is nothing like a playhouse for fine prospects; and when, without fatigue and trouble, one can see all Europe, *well lighted for a shilling*, I wonder how any body can be so foolish, (no allusion to you, Sir,) as to waste both time and money for the chance of viewing it in dark and bad weather, merely from the vanity of saying you *have seen*, what very likely you *never saw.*”

“ Why you know a little, Mr. Eugene,” cried I.

“ Ah, Sir,” he replied importantly, “ and so would you also, if like me, you had been able to get behind the scenes, and peep into the green room.”

“ Why, you monkey,” said my aunt, “ you are now talking to the author of two most successful tragedies, *Werter*, and *Eloisa.*”

From this moment his respect, and attention, became perfectly ridiculous. To none did he bow so low, nor add, “ Sir,” with such profound respect; and he would have answered our bell prior to a prince’s. At dinner hearing my aunt say, that she was so tired of Neufchatel and Parmasan cheeses, that she could no longer eat them, he hastened from the room, but speedily returned bearing on a platter, a fragment of real Cheshire.

“ There,” he cried with exultation, as he placed it upon the table, “ and it is none the worse, Ma’am, I assure you, for having been bought in Little Russel-street, exactly opposite Drury Lane Theatre.””

On the following morning we hired a carriage and proceeded towards Berne, leaving our theatrical *garçon* in particularly high spirits; as, he had heard that his neighbour the Marquis of Villette, (Voltaire’s heir,) intended to re-open the private

theatre at Ferney, and that there was even a distant chance of himself getting an engagement.*

We stopped at Lausanne, and supped at the *table d'hôte*; where, my schoolfellow, Lord Paget, now the Marquis of Anglesea, sat opposite me. He seemed to wish to enter into conversation with me, and I am sure I was more than equally anxious to chat over with him “auld lang syne;” but *Westminster pride* allowing neither of us to make the first overture, we parted as we met, in dignified silence.

I remember that, during the three years my most pleasant and favourite school fellow, George Colman, lived in chambers close to mine in the Temple, we never spoke, and, probably, to this hour, should not have exchanged a syllable, had he not, when we met at the Westminster School anniversary, coolly, said,

“Come, Reynolds, let us toss up who speaks first.”

Late the following evening we reached Berne, only two miles from which, was situated the residence of Sir Francis Vincent; the gentleman, the reader will remember, on whose information relative to the death of Mr. C. Purdon, the weal or woe of our family, now wholly depended.

Early the next morning, all nervousness and anxiety, I hastened to his house, where he received me with great po-

* I now regret that I did not apply for admission to Voltaire's residence; “amidst whose walls,” as Rousseau says, “grosser, and more disgusting adulation had been practised, than in the palace of the most craving Eastern despot.” It was reported while I was in the neighbourhood, that a picture was even then to be viewed, in which, by his own command, Voltaire was represented at the age of seventy, as Dorilas, the youthful hero of his own tragedy of *Merope*. Another anecdote that I heard of him, was of a more amusing description. He would occasionally arise with the sun, on some fine morning, and booting himself, and placing a hunting cap on his head, he would commence a rapid and noisy promenade along the corridors, communicating with the bed-chambers of the *petits maîtres* whom his intrigues, and his reputation had attracted, and of the titled females from whom, on their first introduction to the *grand homme*, any mark of admiration short of a fit, was deemed a breach of politeness. Then loudly blowing his horn, and smacking his whip, he would exclaim, “*À la chasse!* *À la chasse!*” till all had prepared themselves, and rushing from their chambers, eager for the invigorating and exhilarating sport. Then directing them to follow him, Voltaire would importantly lead the way to his bed-chamber, where, withdrawing the sheets, and pointing to the fleas, he would exclaim, in his stentorian voice, “*Voilà, le gibier!*”

liteness; but, so impatient was I to gain the desired intelligence, that I am afraid I did not meet him with an equal return. Abruptly intruding my subject, I proceeded to tell him that I had travelled all the way from London to Berne, wholly for the purpose of learning from him in what part of France the late Mr. C. Purdon was buried.

“The *late* C. Purdon!” exclaimed Sir Francis, “what, is he dead?”

This question, or rather answer, left me more dead than alive!

After a few efforts, however, I recovered myself sufficiently to mention the five thousand pounds insurance, our vain inquiries in England and Paris, the information we had received, relative to himself, and was continuing my piteous account, when he stopped me, and exclaimed,

“Is it possible, Sir, that you have travelled the whole distance from London to this place, *solely* for the purpose of seeing me on the subject you mention? Sir, though in early life I was very intimate with Mr. C. Purdon, and during the whole period of our acquaintance, I always respected him for his frank and honourable conduct, yet for some years, I have never once *seen* or even *heard* of him; and I am truly sorry, that on such apparently loose information, you should have proceeded on this *wild goose chase*; pray tell my old friend, your father, that I sincerely lament this most peculiarly cruel misfortune; but when a letter or private communication might have—However, I will not increase your distress by censuring errors which can not now be remedied; but, simply add, that as long as you remain at Berne, I shall be happy to have the pleasure of seeing you as often as it may suit your convenience.”

I thanked Sir Francis, and, retiring, I returned to my inn; where communicating to my companion the unhappy result of all our wanderings, she became even more dejected than myself. However, after the real *screwing up* time, dinner, she revived a little, and advised me to support the disappointment as my father would, when he should be informed of it.

“My life on it,” she added, “he will only cut some good-humoured joke on the folly of the expedition, and then exclaim, ‘Come now, say something pleasant; for, these are not the first thousands I have lost nor will they be the last I shall gain.’ ”

The next day we retraced our road to Geneva; and *chemin faisant*, in spite of our failure, with the buoyancy and inconsiderateness of youth, instead of immediately returning to England, we mutually agreed to proceed towards Savoy, in the determination of seeing Italy. Putting this sage plan into immediate execution, we journeyed over rugged, gigantic mountains, half lost, and half suffocated, in clouds and vapours, till we reached Anneci about an hour before midnight.

Here we literally supped on a stewed crow, garnished with black horse beans; and slept between sheets so thin and rotten, that the straw perforating their whole extent, " tickled slumber" during the livelong night.

At four the next morning we both arose, and finding neither carriage, horses, nor coachman ready, we demanded where the latter slept. Being informed, we proceeded to a miserable looking hovel, and the door being closed, knocked loudly against it, but receiving no answer, I boldly opened it, and entering a long room, discovered on the floor an infinite variety of two and four legged animals. Postboys, dogs, cats, carriers, pigs, waiters, sheep, Savoyard mountebanks, Savoyard monkies, *filles-de-chambre*, children and fleas. I loudly called my coachman, and after a desperate vocal exertion, the whole farm-yard began first to grunt, then to stretch, and then to rise. The two last actions produced an effect too much for mortal endurance. With my finger on my nose, I retired, crying with Trinculo—

"Truly a most ancient and fish-like smell."

The following night, at Chamberri, we got no bed whatever, and our health, money and courage failing us, on the next day, turning our backs on the land of saints, stilettos and starvation, we directed our course toward the land of good roads, good living, and good inns. To this new, and somewhat more sensible arrangement, only one objection was proposed, viz.—that when asked, on our return, our opinions concerning Italy, we should be compelled to confess that we had advanced no further than Savoy. However, I soon exposed to my aunt the futility of her fear; and the result proved the correctness of my anticipation; for nobody ever demanded our opinions, nor troubled their heads either about us or our tour.

On our arrival at Lyons, we took places in the Diligence for Paris: and, after suffering a stewing confinement during four

long hot days and nights, in this suffocating slow wagon, we once more entered the French capital. At the Hotel d'York, as I expected, we found Mr. Nowell waiting to receive us; and as the reader may *not* have expected, the conclusion of my aunt's tour, was the acquirement of a real *living husband*, instead of the discovery of a *dead widower*. She returned with me to London, but was speedily followed by Mr. Nowell, and in a few months afterwards, they were married. To the end of his life, her husband loved and respected her, but he would frequently jocularly say—

“What an escape, the *right* man Mr. *Newell* has had.”

On my return, my father complained much of those officious friends who had thus deceived him; and then asked me what their absurd *cock and bull* stories had cost him?—I replied by informing him of the sale of the old carriage at Geneva; and then added, that the profits had very nearly paid all our expenses. With much gratification, he patted me on the shoulder, and though singular, it is true, that he *did* cut his jokes on the failure of our tour, and added—

“I think, Fred, you ought to be nicknamed the unsuccessful *resurrection man*.”

We heard some years afterwards, that Mr. Purdon died a natural death in the East Indies. Owing to the lapse of time, (I presume) my father received no money from the insurance office; but I believe, he was benefited by dividends. I never met Mr. Purdon, but I have heard my father say he was a mild, friendly, liberal man; and that, descended from an ancient family, and enabled to keep a splendid establishment, he was visited by personages of the highest rank and talent: as a proof, at his house Sheridan was first introduced to the late Duchess of Devonshire. For myself, whether Mr. Purdon be dead or alive, I have to thank him, as I hope my readers have, for a very agreeable *Tour to Switzerland*.

END OF VOLUME THE FIRST.

THE
LIFE AND TIMES
OF
FREDERICK REYNOLDS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER X.

VARIETIES.

“ Papillon du Parnasse, et semblable aux abeilles,
A qui le bon Platon compare nos merveilles ;
Je suis chose légère, et vole à tout sujet,
Je vais de fleur, en fleur et d'objet en objet.
Mais quoi ! je suis volage en vers, comme en amours.”

LA FONTAINE.

ON my return from Switzerland, I found the whole town infected with another mania,—Private Theatricals. Drury Lane, and Covent Garden, were almost forgotten in the performances at Richmond House ; and the Earl of Derby, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Mrs. Hobart, and Mrs. Damer, in the “*Way to Keep Him*,” and “*False Appearances*,” were considered, by crowded, and fashionable audiences, equal, if not superior, to Kemble, Lewis, Mrs. Siddons, and the present Countess of Derby.

I did not witness the acting of either of these distinguished personages ; but, Macklin said, that they only exemplified, what he had always asserted, viz. that the best private actor who ever trod the stage, was not *half so good as Dibble Davis*—a third-rate performer of that day.

The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, imitating and emulating the example of the Duke of Richmond, erected a splendid theatre at Blenheim, with the intention of their producing a theatrical representation, which should totally eclipse

all previous attempts. Fashionable expectation being excited to its acme, it was not without considerable difficulty, that Miles Peter Andrews procured two tickets; one of which he gave to me with an invitation to accompany him.

On our arrival at Oxford, we dined with his cousin Robert Pigou, then, a student at Christ-church; to whom, and the guests, Andrews introduced me, as the *author of Werter*. An old retired tutor present, paid me the most marked attention for a considerable time, till happening to express his extreme surprise that I should speak English just like a native, his error was exposed to the great amusement of the rest of the company. Finding that I was not the *GOETHE* he had conceived me to be, the old gentlemen expressed his contempt for me, during the remainder of the evening, even more plainly, than he had previously, his admiration.

Holman, who was at Oxford, for the purpose of keeping his terms, on the following day, took an early dinner with us, at the Star Inn. Having been presented with a ticket, by the Duchess of Marlborough, Holman, at Andrews' request and mine, joined our party, and ordering a post-chaise, we all started in the afternoon for Blenheim.

We arrived at Woodstock about seven o'clock in the evening, October the 19th, 1787. Presenting our tickets to the officers at the lodge of this magnificent palace, we were immediately admitted. The lofty trees of the fine, old park, being covered with variegated lamps, hung in the most tasteful devices, the sudden transition from almost utter darkness, to this most brilliant illumination, was extremely effective.

Advancing along the great avenue, we reached the river Glyme, over which, was thrown a handsome bridge, consisting of one spacious, and two smaller arches. Crossing to the other side, we approached the statue of the great Duke of Marlborough, placed on the summit of a lofty column, the pedestal of which was covered with an inscription, enumerating his victories, and rewards. Here, the *coup d'œil* was indeed magnificent: such, was the brilliancy of the illumination, that not only every feature of the statue, but, the smallest figure of the inscription, was beautifully distinct.

Entering the quadrangular court of the palace, we were

conducted towards the theatre, originally a green-house, but then, enlarged, and embellished, was deemed capable of accommodating upwards of two hundred spectators.

The house was crowded to excess ; but, our friend Monck Berkley, (son of the worthy Dean of Canterbury, and what, on the present occasion, was a much greater feather in his cap, author, and speaker of the Prologue,) had taken care to secure us, places. Quietly therefore taking possession of them, we seated ourselves, and in a few minutes afterwards, the play commenced.

The performances consisted of Kelly's "*False Delicacy*." and Mrs. Cowley's "*Who's the Dupe?*" The characters were thus sustained :—

FALSE DELICACY.

MEN.

CECIL	-	-	-	Lord Henry Spencer.
SYDNEY	-	-	-	Lord William Russell.
SIR HARRY NEWBURY		-		Honourable Mr. Edgecumbe.
COLONEL RIVERS	-	-	-	Lord Charles Spencer.
LORD WINWORTH	-	-	-	Mr. Spencer.

WOMEN.

LADY BETTY LAMPTON	-		Lady Elizabeth Spencer.
MISS MARCHMONT	-	-	Lady Caroline Spencer.
MISS RIVERS	-	-	Lady Charlotte Spencer.
MRS. HARLEY	-	-	Miss Peshall.

WHO'S THE DUPE.*

MEN.

DOILEY	-	-	-	Lord Henry Spencer.
GRADUS	-	-	-	Lord William Russell.

WOMEN.

CHARLOTTE	-	-	-	Lady Charlotte Spencer.
ELIZABETH	-	-	-	

But, in my opinion, the most amusing actor in the theatre, sat next to me,—I mean Andrews, who was then, about forty

* I cannot recollect, who performed Granger, Sandford, and Elizabeth.

years of age; very prepossessing in his appearance; popular, as a writer of epilogues, and other dramatic compositions; rich, in the possession of a large income arising from his gunpowder mills at Dartford and Faversham: mixing in the most fashionable society; extremely hospitable; and so truly original, so unlike the “dull person you generally sit next to,” that, even in his most vulnerable point, *irritability*, he was still entertaining.

During the first act, the beauty of the young Ladies Spencer, and the elegant and expensive dresses worn by them, and the other performers much attracted his attention: but, during the middle of the second act, he seemed (to use his own expression) to grow rather *figetty*; and as it approached the termination, he yawned, coughed, and made use of another of his odd phrases, “Tiresome, fusty stuff, Sir.”

Being, myself, unable to hear one line out of twenty, which these *really private* actors uttered, I expressed a wish that some friendly person would hint to them, that the entertainment of their audience would not be diminished if they would condescend to speak audibly. This gentle sarcasm, which I had imagined to have been wholly on Andrews’ side of the argument, instead of appeasing, only more inflamed him, and he vehemently cried,

“I wish quite the contrary, my dear Sir! quite the contrary!—If you knew any thing of the matter, Sir, you would be aware, that *not to hear them*, is our only chance of getting through this tiresome evening. Now, at Richmond House, there were Lord Henry Fitzgerald, and Mrs. Damer; but, I am afraid, my dear Holman, we have no hope of seeing even one good performer here.”

At this moment, the Duke’s porter appeared on the stage in character, and exclaimed,

“A letter, Sir Harry!”

These words, he delivered in such a strong natural, audible tone of voice, that on his exit, Andrews loudly applauded him, and even Holman and I, could not refrain from joining in the applause.

At the end of the second act, refreshments of every description, (for the whole arrangement was on the most liberal and

munificent scale) were presented to the audience; and the Duke, inferring, probably from his own feelings, that the mental amusements of the company, would not be diminished, by the corporeal gratifications of tea, coffee, orgeat, ices, &c. took on himself the office of grand sur-intendant of the whole proceedings.

No host, perhaps, was ever more attentive to his guests. Soon after the third act had commenced, his Grace,—hearing the clattering of cups, and a loud whispering, arising from that part of the theatre, where the aldermen had other electors of the city of Oxford, together with their wives and children, (of various ages,) were seated,—his Grace, naturally concluded, from his knowledge of the civic character, that the above-mentioned noise, was a hint, for additional refreshments. Accordingly, in his hospitality, he was extremely anxious to meet their wishes; but in the middle of an act, he did not precisely know how to proceed. However, during the serious love scene, between Sir Harry Newburgh and Miss Rivers, the clamorous report of *civic war*, greatly increasing, one of his Grace's *suite officiously*, rather than *officially*, eager to relieve the Duke from his perplexity, hastily arose, and (at the very moment Sir Harry was on the point of rushing into the heroine's arms)—addressing himself to the noble performers, he thus most energetically exclaimed—

“Stop—some of the company want more tea.”

Then, turning towards the *little* and *large* body corporate, he added,

“Ladies and Gentlemen, you shall be served immediately.”

Refreshments were again supplied, and I believe, for the first time in a theatre, the *entertainment* was given in the *middle* of the *play*.

Shortly afterwards, a dance by the characters, was executed so elegantly, as to attract the attention and applause of the whole audience. Indeed, the ease and grace of all their manners, now they assumed their natural characters, and proceeded to practise the art, they *really* understood, made us doubt, whether they were the same persons, who, a few minutes previously, had displayed so much awkwardness and stiffness.

During the farce of *Who's the Dupe?* Andrews became des-

perately impatient, and but for the fortunate introduction of an Italian air, by Lady Charlotte, which she sang most delightfully, all my exertions, I am persuaded, would barely have restrained him from leaving the theatre.

A few minuets before the curtain dropped, we were summoned from our box, by Moncke Berkley; who informed us, to our great gratification, that the Duke and Duchess, having heard of three great theatrical personages being in the front of the house, had desired the pleasure of conversing with us, behind the scenes.

Andrews, restored to good humour in the surprise of the moment, drew forth, and arranged his frill and ruffles; Holman adjusted his hair and cravat, and then glancing at mine, which, according to my usual ill-fortune, was "not happy in its folds that day,"* without asking my consent, undertook to remodel the whole form and structure thereof. Whilst Holman was performing this operation, Andrews industriously attempted to give a more interesting and *négligé* character to my countenance, by a better arrangement of my *toupet*; both of them, thus suddenly transforming themselves into valets, solely from the dread, lest my personal carelessness, detracting from their personal magnificence, might mar the whole effect of our grand *entrée*.

Berkley then conducting us to the stage door, informed us, that, in all probability, we should be invited to the public breakfast, on the following morning.

Our reception from the Duke and Duchess, and from the whole party of noble Thespians, was so conciliating, and flattering, that I suddenly became thoroughly convinced we should be requested to continue inmates, at Blenheim, during the remainder of the festive week. But Andrews, our facetious friend, was fast preparing, (unintentionally I own,) to show me the fallacy of this conviction.

In course, he took the lead in conversation, and his natural volubility, increased by sudden joy, carried all before it. Holman, with his usual politeness, endeavoured, but vainly to get a hearing—as for me, I at once, gave up all hope of distin-

* Advice to Julia.

guishing myself, and proceeding to another part of the stage, entered into a conversation with a very cheerful and interesting old lady,—the Duchess of Bedford, grandmother to the Duke. While thus pleasantly engaged, I heard the principal actor, “never ending, still beginning.”

“My dear friends,” said Andrews, “for your own sakes, I speak my mind—your theatre is too cold, and you have chosen a dull obsolete play. Even real sterling talent, could have done nothing with the heavy walking ladies and gentlemen, in *“False Delicacy.”* You should have acted one of Murphy’s light, pleasant comedies;” and he added, in great earnestness, as if he had purposely meant to mark an allusion, of which I firmly believe, he was wholly unconscious, “For instance,—*All in the Wrong.*”

The spleen of the whole party, being already moderately excited, they deemed this *unintentional* sarcasm, *intentionally* personal; the ladies fanned themselves, and the gentlemen commenced a frowning retreat. But, these hints did not in the least degree, discompose Andrews, who, still, without the slightest idea of giving offence, thus continued—

“To be sure, I like the dancing, and the Italian airs; yes, my dear friends, and I like the servant with the letter; now, *that*, is real nature,—*that* man is born a comedian,—worth already, above two pounds per week; but, you see, though an actor may be a gentleman, it does not follow that every gentleman—”

At this moment, supper was announced; and all immediately quitted the stage, leaving us alone, and each staring at the other. Andrews was much mortified at being left out of the party, but Holman, and I, recovering from our surprise, conceiving we had been sufficiently kindly treated, endeavoured to compose him, by stating that none, but the Duke and Duchess’ immediate friends, were invited to supper; however, irritability once roused, is not so suddenly allayed, and Andrews’ was increased by Moncke Berkley entering and blaming him for having been so frank in his criticisms on private acting; adding, that he feared after what had passed, we should not be invited to the public breakfast, on the morrow.

“ And what then?” burst forth Andrews. “ Do you think I will condescend to flatter a parcel of private actors, who *pay* to see audiences, instead of audiences *paying* to see them. Come along, my dear friends, we will have *our petit souper*; and though I have no doubt, that *off* the stage the Duke, Duchess, and all the party, are most agreeable, estimable personages; yet, *on* the stage!—Oh! thank fortune, there is no chance of their ever acting in a play of mine; if they did, though even you wrote and spoke the prologue, Mr. Berkley—”

Here, luckily, our carriage was announced, and we hurried into it, without further parley.

On our road to Oxford, Andrews’ anger gradually subsided; and after supper he was completely restored to good-humour by Holman’s whimsically saying—

“ At any rate, Andrews, *you* ought to acknowledge that there was *one* great actor in the Marlborough family.”

“ When, which, my dear Sir?”

“ Why, their heroic ancestor—the glorious consumer of gunpowder.”

During the remainder of our stay at Oxford, nothing occurred, probably at all worthy of repetition, excepting, that one evening at a party, Bliss, the Degree Beadle, with his attendants in full array, walked into the room with great solemnity, and presented us, by order of the Vice-Chancellor, with honorary degrees. Holman, and I, immediately detecting the hoax, laughed aloud; but, Andrews, displaying more of the old soldier, met them on their own ground, pretended to believe the presentation genuine, and indignantly said he would not accept of such *trumpery*.

On my return to town, from this scene of gaiety, I experienced a sad reverse; for I was informed by my mother, that there had been another execution in the house, and that my father had been so pressed by his creditors, he was compelled to live in concealment.

It was now evident that the evil day, so long delayed, had, at last arrived; and we, who had for years been fortune’s favourites, were now doomed to be fortune’s fools. The change was as rapid, as it was severe. Southbarrow, and our house

in town, were instantly disposed of; and all our horses, pictures, carriages, plate, and furniture, were immediately sold.

My father, with what money he could collect, (only three and twenty guineas, which I carried to him at Gravesend,) fled to France. My poor mother, with an income of about seventy pounds per annum, sole remnant of her family estate, took lodgings up two pair of stairs in Knightsbridge; but, being totally unable to accommodate there, either Richard or myself, as we had no income whatever, or any probability of acquiring one, our prospect in life became truly terrific.

At length, Jack, (in comparison with us a prosperous gentleman, having married the widow of Alderman Hart,) gave us a temporary asylum at his small villa, at Aldenham, in Hertfordshire. Such, however, is the strange vicissitude of human affairs, that before we had sojourned with him a week, we received a letter from Trowbridge, informing us of the death of my revered grand-father, at the extraordinary age of one hundred years.

He bequeathed the bulk of his property to his daughter; but, remembering the distressed, desolate state of his grandsons, he left a legacy of twelve hundred pounds to Richard, one of nine hundred to me, and another, the amount of which I do not remember, to Jack.

Richard, and I, immediately returned to London, and though, with our new fortune, we could not exactly kick the world before us, it enabled us to take cheap chambers in the Temple, and, with faithful old nurse for our domestic, (to use my father's phrase,) "gave us time to turn ourselves about."

My mother, and my brother John, supplied us with various articles of furniture, and other necessaries; and profiting by our father's misfortunes, Richard and I, both vowed to live within our income, small as it was. Probably, we should have soon found this oath to have been of easier utterance, than execution, but, for three sufficing reasons, viz: First, that our landlord, unaccountable as it may appear, never called for his rent, during the whole four long years we resided in his chambers, nor could we ever, by any inquiries, discover him: Secondly, that the very offer of wages to old Morgan, to use her

own expression, “would have awfully excited her Welsh blood:” And, thirdly, that our friends proved they were not summer friends, “for in the winter of our discontent,” they, more frequently than ever, invited us to their dinners and houses.

Yet, the interest of two thousand pounds, for the sole income and support of three persons, (residing in the metropolis,) as may easily be conceived, afforded them but a very scanty pittance. During two whole years, whenever I was compelled to dine at home, I had regularly the same fare; viz. (pardon the *petty* reminiscence,) kidnies, toasted on a fork, potatoes boiled in a shaving pot, and a small quantity of weak punch in a cracked basin. Sad contrast to the days when “aught short of hock, would rouse the drinker’s spleen.”

Having the freedom of Covent Garden Theatre, on the evenings I dined at home, I regularly frequented it; and there remained, sometimes flirting with the actresses before the curtain, and sometimes making love to those behind it, till at length, I was paragraphed in the Morning Herald, as the “*Adonizing Werter*.” Sweet, interesting name!—this is but one of the many grateful debts I owe thee. Could the author of any classical tragedy have had the honour to be thus noticed? would Shakspeare have been paragraphed as the “*Philandering Coriolanus*,” or Addison, as the “*Coqueting Cato*.” No—that happiness was reserved for the *irregular Werter*.

I soon, however, began to find, that it required far more philosophy than I possessed, to support with patience the daily annoyances, produced by this sudden change of circumstances. My wardrobe, which was previously somewhat scanty, now became frightfully small; and even my best dress, in spite of all old Morgan’s patching and manœuvring, in which arts, she certainly showed no contemptible talent, was yet considerably below gentlemanly *par*.

But, as old Pangloss says, “every thing is for the best,” and even this disadvantage, had its advantages; for one night at the Theatre, seeing Holman sitting with Mrs. C——,* I

* The beautiful mistress of the Duke of * * * *

entered the box, and beginning a familiar conversation with my friend, I saw the lady, by her frowns and gestures, intimate her surprise, that he should converse in such friendly terms, with a person of so shabby an appearance. Inclining towards her, I heard Holman say, in a half whisper,

“ It is his fancy, for I assure you, he is not only highly esteemed as an author, but on account of his humour and original conversation, he is considered one of the most desirable companions in London.”

Now, had I been well dressed, and completely *comme il faut*, not one syllable of this *high-flown praise*, should I have heard. But, as the case stood, Holman being compelled to cut his *coat*, according to my *cloth*, persisted in so magnifying and exaggerating my abilities, that, at last, the lady feeling convinced if I had only half, of what were attributed to me, I had even then a most uncommon portion, humbly hoped, when I quitted the box, “ That she should have the honour of seeing me again.”

One morning shortly afterwards, accidentally visiting Lord’s Cricket Ground, I saw, to use the cricket phrase, “ standing out in the long field,” Lord Winchelsea and Colonel Lennox ; both of whom seemed wholly occupied by their game. This circumstance is only worthy of mention, as the Colonel accompanied by Lord Winchelsea as his second, had that very morning fought a duel, with his Royal Highness the Duke of York, on Wimbledom Common.—The result of the rencontre is well known ; but still, as some of my readers may not have seen this interesting account, I refer them to the report of the seconds,* if only to recall the brave conduct of the late Duke of Richmond, and (if I may be allowed the expression) the redundant intrepidity, princely condescension, and gallant bearing of his Royal Highness the Duke of York.

On the next day, I went to Epsom Races, where, amongst other novel sights, I saw on the course, the celebrated duellist of the time, **—. At my request, Colonel Bradshaw introduced me to him, and whilst I was conversing with him, and admiring him for his “ *suaviter in modo*,” I speedily witnessed a specimen of his “ *fortiter in re*.” A sporting

* Vide European Magazine, May 26th, 1789.

gentleman, (who had lately *levanted* at Newmarket, and amongst other bettors left our hero *minus*) passing at the time in a swaggering style, **—— proclaimed him aloud as a cheat, and a blacklegs.

“Cheat, and blacklegs!” cried the indignant gamester, “Sir,—dare you——”

“Yes, Sir!” interrupted the accuser, in his usual intrepid manner, breasting him; “and under the same circumstances, I would say the same to any man in England.”

“Oh,” rejoined his alarmed opponent, “if you would say the same to any man in England, *it is not personal*, and so, Sir, I am satisfied.”

I must now speak of an actor, who, for years, had greatly added to the stock of public amusement, and from this period so essentially contributed to the promotion of my dramatic success—Lewis. Hitherto, I had chiefly seen him in *Percy*, *Norval*, and other tragic characters; but, after witnessing his performance of *Copper Captain*, to the *Estifania* of Mrs. Abington, I was so struck with his rich, buoyant gentlemanly humour, that I immediately resolved to commence a comedy, in the hope of seeing displayed in it, the powers of this original and excellent comedian.

In three months, I completed the outline, and as if I had been determined never to face the theatrical tribunal, without taking counsel’s opinion, I again consulted another barrister, as to the arrangement and conclusion of my piece; I mean my friend Const, who at that time also lived in the Temple. This gentleman, however, unlike Serjeant Bolton, possessed both dramatic and forensic knowledge. He read the manuscript, made some valuable alterations, and by the termination of the year, I delivered the comedy of the *DRAMATIST* into the hands of Mr. Harris, at Knightsbridge.

In a few days afterwards, this prompt and active manager sent for me, and saying, that though the town was wild indeed, he feared, my play would be too wild even for them. This was the first refusal of the *Dramatist*. It was next presented to Drury Lane Theatre, by Cobb, the author of the *Haunted Tower*, and the *Siege of Belgrade*;—a most obliging and disinterested brother play-wright.

Sheridan also deeming the comedy *too wild*, Andrews took it to the elder Colman, who, evidently was of the same opinion; for, during an interview between them on the subject, the latter exclaimed.

“Andrews, this play must surely be yours.”

“Why, my dear Sir?” was the reply.

“Because,” rejoined Colman, “there is *gunpowder* in every line.”

I immediately commenced altering and improving it, and in a few weeks afterwards, presented it to the three great managers, under the desperate title of CRIM. CON. One of my tribunal wavered for a time between *Pro* and *Con*; but two of them decided against it *Nem. Con.*

At this period, the unfortunate malady of the king and the well known regency question, completely engrossed public attention. The *trimming* and *rattling* was so rapid, that on the day following the publication of the third unpromising bulletin, I read in a leading ministerial newspaper:—

“Mr. Pitt is immediately going abroad, we understand, for the purpose of finishing his education;”—and the “Lord Chancellor’s head is to ornament the next number of the *Conjurer’s Magazine*.”

Amongst those in the upper house, who *suddenly* became worshippers of the rising sun, was an old gallant Duke, a Scotch Marquis, and the Bishop of _____. I cannot now recollect any of the names of the *Ratters*, in the lower house; probably the very vastness of their number confounds my memory.

Dr. Willis, (then simply a country practitioner,) speedily became a principal actor in the drama. He had an “*eye* like Mars, to threaten or command.” *Threaten*, in every sense of the word; for his numerous patients, stood as much in awe of this formidable weapon, as of bars, chains, or straight waistcoats. After a few weeks attendance, allowing his Majesty a razor to shave himself, and a penknife to cut his nails, Dr. Warren, Dr. Reynolds, and the other physicians, openly attacked Dr. Willis, with a charge of rashness and imprudence, one evening before a committee of the House Commons. Burke also was very severe on this point, and authoritatively

and loudly demanded to know, “If the Royal patient had become outrageous at the moment, what power the Doctor possessed of instantaneously terrifying him into obedience?

“Place the candles between us, Mr. Burke,” replied the Doctor, in an equally authoritative tone—“and I’ll give you an answer. There, Sir! by the *EYE!* I should have looked at him *thus*, Sir—*thus!*”

Burke instantaneously averted his head, and making no reply, evidently acknowledged this *basiliskan* authority.*

On the 27th of February, the Duke of Leinster, Lord Charlemont, and other delegates, presented an address from the parliament of Ireland to the Prince, requesting him to assume the title and power of Prince Regent; by a strange coincidence, the very day they arrived in this country, the physician’s report announced the King’s recovery in the following bulletin:—

“His Majesty continues free from complaint.”

Here, seeing the overthrow of all their hopes, the noble commissioners returned to their native land: and though their mission was in every respect fair and honourable, yet the Tory newspapers, voting it a blundering expedition nicknamed them “BULLS.”

I need not dwell on the important event of his Majesty resuming the reins of government, nor will I recapitulate the numerous illuminations, public dinners, fetes, and galas given on the occasion. Amongst others who determined to be foremost in the list of conspicuousness, was that leading lady of fashion, Mrs. Broadhead, who issued cards of invitation to a grand masked ball at her house in Portland-place.

I have every reason to recollect this party with peculiar gratification, as it was the cause of my introduction to one, who, during thirty years, proved that, friendship was more than “a name.” I mean Major Topham, a man far better known by his talents, as biographer, dramatist, and conductor of that popular journal “The world,” than even by his original style of dress or high-bread manners.†

* The Doctor afterwards told me this story at Gretford.

† Topham was always of opinion, that, in writing a narrative of events, and of characters and manners, though nothing “should be set down in malice,” yet

This gentleman, Andrews, Morton, and myself, resolving if possible to "cut a figure" at this party, wrote to Mrs. Broadhead to know whether she would object that we should come as political characters. This elegant, interesting lady kindly, but thoughtlessly, answering, that she had no objection, we began to prepare our masks and dresses with even more than feminine assiduity.

The important night at last arrived; we assembled at Andrews's house; where, having thoroughly equipped and arranged ourselves, we all departed in the following characteristic dresses.

Andrews as the old, gallant Duke of ——, in a full court suit, with a large rat's head.

Topham as the Bishop of ——, in full pontificalia, surmounted also by an immense rat's head.

Morton, as one of the noble Irish delegates, with a great bull's head and tail: a suit of cut crimson velvet, with the fine laced coat, buttoned behind; and on his breast, suspended from a sky blue ribbon, a large potato, intended to represent the order of St. Patrick.

Myself, as a rat catcher, in a peer's robes, with a small trap, and a great cat's head.

When we reached Mrs. Broadhead's door, and descended from our carriages, the huzzaing, hissing, laughing, and pressure of the mob assembled to view the masqueraders, became tremendous.

"Dash me, there's a bishop," cried some of them, when Topham appeared.

"There's old Q. Go it!" added others, as Andrews advanced.

"Three groans for the noble Irish bull," howled a third party to Morton.

As for me, when I attempted to pass, I was actually deafened by discordant imitations of cats, and the yet more discordant contention between our censurers and approvers. Having however surmounted this first ordeal, we approached

every human frailty should not be totally banished from the page; and he always expressed his hopes, that should any biographer ever choose him for his subject, he might be exhibited to his friends and the world "*just as he was.*"

the second—the entrance into the hall. Here, to our astonishment, instead of exciting the mirth we expected, the storm of discord increased. From every part of the house the company descended to see us; and I, who was to have taken the lead, and had intended to have displayed my own *rare wit*, soon found that I had become only “the cause of wit in others.” At the same time our ears were assailed with the oddest mixture of menacing and encouraging expressions.

“ You silly fools,” cried a Whig.

“ Come on, we will stand by you,” exclaimed a Tory.

Amidst a thousand similar exclamations, and amidst all this turmoil of contending and party opinions, Andrews keeping so firm a hold on my robe, that with all my efforts I could not emancipate myself, continued to vociferate in my ear,

“ I told you so, my dear Sir. I knew it would not do ; it is all your fault, my dear Sir. Party spirit runs too high—where is Mrs. Broadhead—where?”

“ Where am I?” interrupted the Bishop, “ owing to these little rat’s eyes, I cannot see. Who’s that?—come, come, pushing may be inevitable, but pinching—”

Here we were soon hurried, or rather carried up the stairs into the drawing-room. There the abuse and encouragement, the pressure and elbowing, particularly from the friends and relatives of the characters whom we were supposed to satirize, so oppressed and exhausted us, that at last the Bishop sank (nearly fainting) into the Bull’s arms. At this moment an angry Irishman seizing and dragging the Bull by his tail, he involuntarily receded, and Topham deprived of his support, fell at full length on the ground, when the rat’s head escaping from its fastenings, discovered the human head, but enveloped in the productions of its own growth. I allude to his immense whiskers, or, as his present Majesty often good humouredly called them, “his great bird’s nests.”

Amidst the roars excited by this accident, Mrs. Broadhead, perceiving that it was high time to interfere, by the aid of some friends, and several of her servants, after much difficulty, succeeded in extricating Topham and Morton from their unpleasant situation. She then conducted us to a back room, where being supplied with dominos and masks, we re-

turned, and safely mixed in the crowd unnoticed and unknown.

We all gloriéd in our obscurity,—even Topham ; for after such a decided failing effort, any *masquerader* may conceive the calm satisfaction we felt in lounging about the room, and triumphing in the aristocratic character of *Don Domino*. “ Do you know me ?—I know you ?—very clever—try again.” and then coolly walking off with the conviction that the substance could never attack the shadow.

Our charming hostess, in partial compensation for her share in our discomfiture, invited us to sup with a *select* party in the library. Here we remained until seven o’clock in the morning ; when, the master of the house, keeping somewhat better hours than his wife, descended in his morning gown and slippers ; and we, having already partaken of an excellent supper with his lady, now enjoyed a comfortable breakfast with her husband.

This good natured old gentleman, who “ hoped we had passed our night as agreeably as he had,” instead of expressing discontent and spleen, at either the expense or discomfort attending these parties, questioned us with much interest as to the entertainment we had received ; and, taking a pride in the success of his wife’s masked ball, seemed delighted when we told him that the whole had passed with the greatest *eclat*. Then bidding farewell to our kind host, we retired ;—and thus, terminated the wild and impracticable attempt of mixing politics with pleasure.

My comedy in its altered, and judging by the event, in its improved state, being shown to Topham, he read and commended it. This judgment was of considerable service to me, for being chief conductor and proprietor of “ The World,” he was then, almost the manager’s manager. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Wells, certainly the most beautiful, though not the best, actress of the day, wishing to take *The Dramatist* for her benefit, Mr. Harris readily consented to this request.

On the stage, a small quantity of beauty goes very far ; so far indeed, that I have heard women of rank and fashion, lavish the most extravagant panegyrics on the personal attractions of an actor of *Romeo* or *Hamlet*, whom had they seen

the previous morning *off* the stage, and without a knowledge of his prepossessing, profession, they would have pronounced a dull, long visaged usher, or a bilious apothecary. In the case, however, of the lady above-mentioned, her beauty was decidedly too captivating and commanding to require the foreign aid of stage ornament, or stage prejudice, to gain it an established and allowed pre-eminence.

The comedy was read in the green-room, and immediately afterwards was put into rehearsal. I had myself many doubts as to the result of the representation ; but all the actors being convinced that it would fail, I ought to have been nearly as certain that it would succeed ;* for at that time, (I dare not include the present time,) these gentlemen seldom, if ever, listened to the play. Each, generally speaking, confined his attention to his own respective part ; and never considering that a monosyllable in a good situation is, to the actor, worth all the repartees in Congreve and Vanbrugh, they grumbled when they had not, to use their own technical, phrases, trap-claps, fat, and foolery.

In my case, however, I had but little hope, for even my hero, Lewis disliked his part. But, on the night the comedy was produced,† he played with such skill, spirit, and enthusiasm, that, when he rushed out of a china closet, in the fourth act, the roars of laughter were immense, and his triumph was complete. Delighted, but astounded, at his own success, and having fractured the trifling quantity of China-ware, that was prepared, (*trifling*, from his distrust of the situation) he knew not what to do either with himself, or his hands. The roars still continuing, in the exhilaration of the moment, seizing Quick, who played *Lord Scratch*, with one hand, and his wig with the other, he threw it up to the ceiling ; leaving his bald Lordship no alternative, but to quit the stage; which he did in grand dudgeon, amidst shouts of railery, and approbation.

After his exit, Lewis made an apology to this admirable comedian, throwing the onus on the surprise of the moment. Shortly afterwards, the play concluding amidst universal good

* Ex grat. *The Busy Body*, *The Constant Couple*, and various other instances.

† May the 15th, 1789.

humour, Mr. Harris, ordered its immediate repetition to be announced.

On a following night, it was repeated with great effect before a numerous audience.

The third night, was for the author's benefit, and had two private patronesses,—Mrs. Bradshaw, widow to the Secretary Bradshaw, and Mrs. Barrett, of Vauxhall. Partly owing to their friendly exertions, the receipts of the house, amounted to one hundred and eighty pounds, and the charges of the house being, then, only one hundred pounds, I walked out of the Treasury, with the overplus in my pocket.

Strutting into our chambers, where Richard, and old Morgan were anxiously awaiting to hear the result, I showed them eight bank notes of ten pounds each; on which, my affectionate brother, but, briefless barrister, with glistening eyes exclaimed,

“ Did I not always tell you Fred, what a capital profession you had chosen.”

The money being common to the wants of all three, was soon expended in paying old debts, and in purchasing new necessaries. Covent Garden being closed for the season, I had no hope of further profit, till the following October or September.

Luckily, however, during the summer, Mr. Harris proposed giving me two hundred pounds for my two succeeding nights, including copyright, and added, that if by any miracle, this benefit play should be performed twenty times, he would give me the twenty-first night.* Having accepted these terms, I returned to chambers with more joint stock money, and now again, we dined, supped, and lived like gentlemen.

A successful comedy, at this period, used to excite a considerable degree of public attention, and either from celebrity, or notoriety, words which perhaps are considered nearly synonymous, the author now began to be deemed “ a *wit* amongst lords, and not absolutely a *fool* amongst wits.”

* This was the origin of the twenty-first night being added to the third, sixth, and ninth nights.

CHAPTER. XI.

ADVENTURES, ACCIDENTS, AND ANECDOTES.

“ Come what, come may,
“ Time, and the hour runs through the roughest day.”

SHAKESPEARE.

DURING the summer of 1789, I visited Topham, at his villa, called Cowslip Hall, situated near Clare, in Suffolk ; not far from Stoke, the family seat of the celebrated Mr. Elwes. Topham’s entertaining life of this gentleman, is to well known, and too generally admired, to require either comment, or panegyric from me ; indeed it exhibits so perfect a picture of character, and eccentricity, as ever to render any other account of its subject, wholly supererogatory.

I will, therefore, only state, that on the day, I saw Stoke, and its owner, this aged representative of the County of Berkshire, this *half million* man, this strange compound of folly, and generosity, (giving to others, but denying every thing to himself,) I found him kind, affable, and pleasant.

He entered freely into conversation, and remarked that, there was only one man in either House, who could talk him out of his money, and that, was *young Pitt* ; of whom, he added,

“ In all, Pitt says, there are pounds, shillings, and pence.”

Both the house, and dress, of our ancient adept in finance, were equally decayed; nor did he invite us to dinner, a compliment he might have *safely* paid us. Yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, so adverse to the formation of a favourable opinion, there was so much of the good old school about him, and his countenance was so interesting, in spite of the white woollen night cap, he always wore, that I left him with regret, in the conviction, that his avarice, and dread of dying in a workhouse, arose from a mental malady, and not, from a perverse disposition.

In the neighbourhood, Mr. Elwes had a formidable rival, in

finance—a retired barrister; the desolate state of whose house, gave it the appearance of being haunted, or “the worst of the worst,” of a property long in chancery.

The day we called, he was receiving from one of his tenants, his Midsummer rent. After my introduction by Topham, and an interchange between us of the usual compliments, the barrister turning towards the farmer, presented him with a small glass of Port wine, which he took, and drank; but then, exhibiting a face of evident disapprobation, the barrister exclaimed,

“ What! do you not like the flavour of this glass of wine, as well as of the one, I gave you last Christmas.”

“ No, dang it,” replied the tenant, “ you see, it has a kind of a different taste.”

“ Ha, ha!” rejoined the lawyer triumphantly, “ now, I have caught you. It is out of the *very same* bottle, and has never been opened since.”

After passing an agreeable fortnight at Cowslip Hall, we started on a trip to Bury St. Edmunds. Topham’s equipage was almost, as singular, as his dress. He drove a curriole, (constructed after a plan of his own,) with four black horses splendidly caparisoned, and followed by two grooms in conspicuous liveries.

His dress consisted of a short scarlet coat, with large cut steel buttons; a very short white waistcoat, top-boots, and leather breeches, so long in their upper quarters, as almost to reach his chin. In order, that the peculiarity of this dress should be duly appreciated, it must be remembered that, at that time, every other person wore very long coats, and very long waistcoats; and breeches so very *short*, that *half* the day, and one *whole* hand were entirely employed in raising them *en derriere*, to avoid any awkward declension, *en avant*.

I have seen many of the court of aldermen enter Guildhall in this manner, until every body, in consideration of its convenience, defying its singularity, adopted Topham’s costume. Thus, he had the *eclat* of introducing the present male fashion, which, in comparison with the last, is not only useful, but *ornamental*.

In spite of all his oddities, however, few men had either upre^r taste, or clearer judgment, than Topham; and he possessed also, in a high degree, those lighter talents that enable a man to shine in society and conversation. As we “trotted along the road,” he reverted to his school-days; and on this subject, I found him extremely communicative, and entertaining.

“When I was at Eton,” he said, “a circumstance occurred that threw the school first into confusion, and then into a rebellion. A boy in the sixth form, named Pigot, for some trifling offence given to Dr. Forster, was flogged. This ignominious chastisement to one so high in scholastic rank, was deemed a perfect profanation; and the flame of discontent ran like lightning through the school. I never can forget the explosion of this diminutive rebellion; when, about two hundred boys, instead of marching into school, desperately rushed into the playing fields, and thence, threw above two hundred Homers into the Thames. It was the work of an instant, done as by a motion of the manual exercise; and never before did the greatest capacity imbibe Greek half so rapidly, as old father Thames!”

“Having performed this notable feat,” he continued, “the two hundred little rebels marched to the inn, at Salthill, to refresh themselves, after their fatigues. The landlord seemed astonished at such a visitation; but, did what he could to provide for his guests. For myself, and forty others of the lower boys, accommodation was easily found, as we slept on the floor. In the morning, the reckoning came to one hundred and fifty pounds; but this circumstance affected not me, for the best of all possible reasons—I had not a farthing. Recourse was, therefore, had to the late Duke of Rutland, and the other boys of elevated rank, who, accordingly, suffered for their wealth. The result of the affair was, that five of the ringleaders were expelled, and the rest returned home, to make peace with their parents.”

I seemed so much gratified by this Eton anecdote, that he was induced to repeat some occurrences during his residence at Cambridge.

“I was,” continued Topham, “seventeen years old when I

was admitted, a fellow-commoner of Trinity College, under Mr. Postlethwayte, the rival tutor of Doctor Watson, who was afterwards Bishop of Llandaff. I there ultimately connected myself with Pulteney, afterwards brought into parliament by the late Duke of Rutland, where by his talents he was soon rendered so celebrated, as a debater. There, also, commenced my friendship with Fitzherbert, with whom I was afterwards still more intimate, when, he became Lord St. Helens.

“But, my principal friend was the second son of Lord Sandwich, a man possessing all the abilities, and even more eccentricities than his father. He had a nickname of most ominous inference, ‘*Devil Montague*.’ Why this repellent appellation was attached to him, I have no idea, except *lucus a non lucendo*; for taking together, his uniformly high honourable conduct, the elegance of his manners and person, the vivacity of his imagination, and the sportiveness of his fancy, there was never man more formed to engage, and fascinate, all who knew him. But like other brilliant objects, he was the meteor of a day, and died of a consumption, very shortly after he had made his first speech, which related to the American war, in the House of Commons. As the last hope of preserving life, he was ordered to try the effects of a sea voyage. I saw him just before he embarked, and even then, retaining the habit he had contracted in early life of playing upon his own nickname, he exclaimed—

“I have given that fat Lord North my vote, that it might be said ‘he now really possesses the *Devil’s* countenance.’”

As Topham thus spoke, the pole of the curriole broke, and the horses, taking fright, ran furiously away. For a time, we endeavoured to preserve our seats, and presence of mind; but, were on the point of being precipitated amongst the horses, and, in all probability, killed on the spot, when Topham exclaiming, “Fly!” threw himself out of the vehicle, on one side, while I followed his example, on the other.

For a few moments, I lay on the ground, more stupefied than hurt; when, rising, and finding myself both sound, and safe, I looked about for my companion; but, even after a somewhat narrow search, I could only discover one half of him. The whole of his head, and body, were buried in a dry

ditch, and naught but "*the inferior man*," was visible on the footpath.

With some difficulty, I raised him again on his legs; when, having searched, and found no injury, he murmured as he proceeded to hobble after his equipage,

"Now Pylades, what's life without a friend?"

At the distance of a quarter of a mile, we found the curri-
clo, or rather its remnants, in the midst of a large flock of
geese; one-third of which were killed, or maimed, and by the
cackling, and screaming of the terrified remainder, we were
inclined to presume, that they conceived themselves in a simi-
lar predicament. The enraged drovers demanded immediate
compensation of Topham; but, for a time he refused, plead-
ing a "set-off;" his animals being equally injured. A gentle-
man, at the same moment, passing in his chariot, politely of-
fered us seats, which we gladly accepted; so, after making our
peace with our opponents, in an hour, we reached Bury.

There, we applied embrocations to our bruises, and dined,
and drank to the memory, of our departed "*brethren of the*
quill."

Whilst our carriage was repairing, we spent some very plea-
sant days at Bury. It was the time of the fair, and amongst
other wild personages exhibited, were an extraordinary Albino,
and Albiness. Extraordinary, indeed! for on the morn-
ing that Topham, and I saw them, his whiskers, or mine, his
short scarlet coat and large steel buttons, or my long balloon
coat, and larger Pierrot buttons, attracting the small red eyes
of the fair creature, she *travelled* them over the whole re-
mainder of our persons, with so much *marked self-gratifica-
tion*, that on leaving the room, Topham smiled, and said,

"In fact—this is the triumph of *singularity!* we pay half-
a-crown to see a curiosity; when, evidently, the curiosity
would have paid double the sum to have seen us."

Many would have been angry at this circumstance—we pre-
ferred being amused by it.

On our return to Cowslip Hall, Andrews joined us, and
brought with him Merry, the author of the poetry under the
signature of *Della Crusca*. Like Topham, this gentleman

had formerly been in the Horse Guards,* and like him was, also, a most entertaining character. Thank fortune, it was my fate to write comedies, during a period, when the town was replete with original characters of every description, whose peculiarities were so obviously humorous, that I may here justly employ the usual remark of a late celebrated statesman; who, whenever he heard, or read a witticism more than commonly effective, observed,

“Very good, very good, indeed! but it was so palpable, it could not have been *missed!*”

Had I written during the present day, I must have starved; for the comic satirist has now (unless he resort to foreign aid from Vaudevilles, &c.) only one character to commence, and conclude his stock with,—the dull cold artificial *Exquisite*. Thus, the critic should not *wholly* ascribe the deterioration in dramatic productions, to the dearth of dramatic genius, but *partly* to the dearth of dramatic character.

My profits on Topham alone, in different comedies, must have amounted to upwards of one thousand pounds; and to prove, that I never introduced him on the stage, without his full consent, and approbation, he used frequently to say publicly,

“Now, if I were to sit for my portrait to Reynolds’ namesake, Sir Joshua, it would cost me a considerable sum. But, in this case, I get painted for nothing; and without hurting *me*, my friend, the artist, not only materially benefits *himself*, but my likeness when finished, instead of being exhibited in a dull gallery, for the cold criticisms of a few solitary connoisseurs, is every night displayed in a crowded theatre, for the gratification, and applause, of thousands.”

We returned to London early in September: and Covent Garden Theatre, opening the same month, the *Dramatist*, with a new epilogue, written by Andrews, and admirably spoken by Lewis, was repeated with considerable success. But,

* Speaking of this regiment, one day, to Topham, he informed us, that many of the privates were shop-keepers; and then added, that on this account, the troops of the line indulged their ridicule, by calling them, “*Cheesemongers*,” and distinguishing the two troops, by the facetious appellations of *Gloucester*, and *Cheshire*.

the night that completely established the comedy in public favour, and made it the fashion through the remainder of the season, was on the eighteenth of October, when, it was commanded by the King; being his first visit to the Theatre since his illness.

His Majesty was accompanied by the Queen, and the three eldest princesses; and all were so much gratified by the rich comic acting of Lewis, Quick, and Edwin, in the characters of *Vapid*, *Lord Scratch*, and *Ennui*, that, during his reign, his Majesty commanded this play no less than twenty times. Miss Brunton received great applause in the following couplet, written for the occasion:—

“ Long in this isle domestic joys have grown,
“ Nursed in the cottage, cherish'd on the throne.”

The comedy having reached the twentieth night, Mr. Harris, determined, that, as the following night was mine, it should be well supported, gave me the *Deserter* for the after-piece, as being the strongest, then, in the Theatre. But further to increase the success of the author's evening, my friend Barrington Bradshaw informed me, that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had condescended to honour the Theatre with his presence. This latter circumstance being promulgated, the Theatre was as full, as on the night his Majesty was present, and the receipts were nearly similar. My profits amounted to two hundred, and twenty-five pounds.*

Old nurse Morgan, at length, wishing to see the mighty *talisman* which had operated such a change in our circumstances, it was settled, that she should have her wish, on the following night. Accordingly, she requested to accompany her, an Irishman of the name of Murphy, who was a porter to the Temple, and was also the occupant of the honourable office of shoe-black to me, and my brother. Not an order being then admitted, I gave her money to pay for a seat in the gallery, for herself, and her companion.

They went, and the good old creature returned much gratified; but, when Murphy brought us our boots in the morning,

* At that time these were enormous profits; the house being small, and the price to the boxes only five shillings, and to the pit three shillings.

and we asked him, how he had been entertained, he only scratched his head, and replied.

“Pretty well, your honours, as for that; but you see Mrs. Morgan has forgotten to pay me.”

“What!” I cried, “I gave her the two shillings for you, myself.”

“Faith, now you are right,” he rejoined, “and, indeed, she paid them at the door of that winding gallery. But that’s not my maning. It’s the *porterage*, Sir! Arrah, the porterage all the way from here to Covent Garden and back; and for that, and the trouble, and the great loss of time, I think your honour yourself will allow, I cannot ax you a farthing short of *another two shillings*.^{**}”

During the month of January, 1790, I met Macklin, for the second time, at a large dinner party, at Mr. Palmer’s, of the Post Office. Though he was then in his ninetieth year, and his memory naturally not improved by age, I suspected, from his stentorian lungs, and rough dictatorial manner, that he would be, what he really proved to be, the sole director of the company. On the cloth being withdrawn, and his energies increased by a hearty dinner, and a cheerful glass, the “*sturdy old evergreen*” cried out abruptly in a thundering voice—

“Silence! let us start a general topic, and thus all pay for our reckonings. Well, let that topic be—the origin of the drama. You see, Sir,” he continued, addressing himself to Doctor Beattie, the mild and interesting author of the “*Minstrel*,” “you shall begin first, Sir. I shall speak second, and—No I will be first—silence—hem—Gentlemen, I beg it to be understood that, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the *Beggar’s Opera*, I—”

Here, being wholly unable longer to restrain my laughter, Macklin abruptly paused, and fixing his great eyes on me, like another Doctor Willis, instantly awed me into silence.

“Who is he?” exclaimed the veteran, in an angry tone, and still glaring on me, without the slightest recollection of our previous acquaintance.

“The author of the new comedy called the *Dramatist*,”

* This inn of court messenger, profiting by the locality of his situation, had evidently picked up some legal knowledge.

replied the master of the house to my great discomfiture, as I now expected another *Eloisa* compliment. But, I was agreeably disappointed.

“Indeed,” cried Macklin, “I saw this comedy the night the King saw it. Come here, young man—so!—Sit next to me,—now, are you writing another piece?”

“I am, Sir,” I replied, with much respect.

“What’s your plot,” and then, without waiting for my answer, he, added, “I’ll give you one myself, Love, Sir, love. Observe—a young lady, whose parents reside at Rickmansworth, in Hertfordshire, comes to town. She goes immediately to the Festino rooms, and on leaving them, a rejected lover attempts forcibly to carry her off, when, she is rescued by a strange, gallant, young officer. Now, Sir, how do you think she returns the obligation? Not in the old hacknied way, by writing him silly *ballets doux*, or, by making him common assignations, and then giving him her hand. No, Sir, no. She at once gives him a *brace* of *Rickmansworth trout* and the matter ends, where it began. There, that is original I think; and though in the school of love, the oldest scholars are not generally considered the greatest proficients, you will allow, young man, that I am capable of treating an *old* passion in a *new* way.”

I am almost ashamed to say, I here again lost all command over my risible faculties; and in my apology, blundering out some absurd joke about trout-tickling the public, Macklin became so irritated, that Doctor Beattie vanished, and all were about to follow his example, when, by his *fact* and good address, our host, Mr. Palmer, so sufficiently restored good humour, as to detain us to supper.

Macklin now became composed, and gave us some most amusing specimens of his reminiscences. Amongst others, he described the contest between Barry and Mossop, in Dublin, with considerable humour. Recurring particularly to their paper war, he quoted the following couplet, which he said had materially tended to diminish the interest the public had previously taken in their dispute:—

“For in public opinion, it is but a toss up,

“Whether Mossop kick Barry, or Barry kick Moesop.”

Still, however, Macklin could not long continue a regular chain of conversation ; and wine (that general confounder of ideas,) not aiding his recollections, he suddenly and violently smacked the person next to him on the back, exclaiming—

“ Who are you, Sir ? ”

The person thus honoured was a short, fat, Irish clergyman, who, at that moment, was considerably absorbed in the mastication of a large “ devil.”

“ Now, Sir,” exclaimed Macklin, “ what is your opinion of Terence’s plays ? ”

The poor parson, more than half confounded by the violence of this sudden attack, hastily replied in a rich Connaught brogue—

“ What ! do you mean his Latin edition ? ”

“ Do you think,” rejoined Macklin, at the same time repeating the smacking operation, “ do you think I mean his Irish edition, and be d——d to you ? ”

The rage, and face of the person, leaving us little doubt that an explosion would ensue, I, with others, copying Doctor Beattie’s example, immediately vanished. What occurred after my departure never reached my ears ; and, therefore, I can only add, that though Macklin, as an actor, and particularly in his own highly drawn characters, of *Sir Pertinax Macsycophant*, and *Sir Archy Macsarcasm*, often brought full houses, I, and many others, must express our doubts whether off the stage he ever attained a similar attraction.

It is true that I did not meet with this great *original*, till he was in the winter of his life ; but I have heard some of his contemporaries assert, that to the *manner*, he conjoined a considerable portion of the *matter*, of Doctor Johnson. On the truth or falsehood of this declaration, I cannot pronounce : but of his *Shylock*, as I have seen it several time, I can venture, boldly to assert that for *Identity* of character, from the first scene to the last, probably, as a performance, it was never surpassed.

“ This was the Jew

“ That Shakspeare drew.”

I must now revert to the French Revolution, which had for

some time excited the public attention in a considerable degree ; but it did not create a general and alarming sensation until the memorable fourteenth of July, 1789, when the *Bastile* was destroyed.

Then, as is usual in these cases, every man began to consider how the consequences might affect himself ; for the *primo mihi*, though certainly, not the “perpetual motion,” is the only real perpetual *motor*. The loyalist saw the revolution in one light, the democrat, in another ; and even, the theatrical manager had also his view of the subject. The *Bastile* must bring money ; that’s a settled point ; and a piece of that name must be written.

Accordingly, a piece under that title was written, and put into preparation at Covent Garden Theatre. But, when the parts were studied, the scenery completed, and the music composed, the Lord Chamberlain refused his license. In this dilemma, Mr. Harris called on me, requesting to know whether all the magnificent preparations intended for the *Bastile*, might not be introduced into the opera that I was then writing, called the *Crusade*.

I, author like, calculating on the powerful aid, such auxiliaries would bring to my piece, answered eagerly in the affirmative, never for an instant, reflecting on the horrible incongruity of representing the deeds and manners of the Christians, and Saracens, of the eleventh century, amongst the buildings of the Parisians, of the eighteenth. However, “the art of our necessities being strange,” I finished the *Crusade*, and the rehearsals commenced ; but during their progress, and the *Bastile* scene, excepting two, were discarded.

At one of these rehearsals, the late Duke of Cumberland, (then a great theatrical amateur) attended ; accompanied by an old Colonel, whose name, I cannot now recollect.—The carpenters were all engaged that morning in setting the platform for the storming of Jerusalem, the grand event of the piece ; consequently, there was no scenery on the stage.

The Duke, who evidently had expected a grand display, expressed his surprise and disappointment ; at seeing only a wide waste ; when, one of the stage carpenters, a simple, but officious fellow, advancing towards his Royal Highness, told him,

with great humility, that, as the flats, (a part of the scenery) and the corresponding side pieces could not be set, owing to the platform, he hoped, that he and his friends would condescend to *imagine* them, in their respective situations.

“I don’t understand,” exclaimed the Duke, and the Colonel together.

“Don’t you?” rejoined the green coat man, “then with your Royal Highness’, and the *other* gentleman’s permission, I will explain my meaning.”

When, ceremoniously conducting them to the back of the stage, and stationing himself at the side, with great self-sufficiency, he said,

“There! now please your Royal Highness, look! I am the side scene, and you are the *pair of flats*. Now you understand?”

Every body, even the Duke, and the Colonel, enjoyed heartily the unintentional allusion.

Mrs. Billington, then in the meridian of her beauty and talent, was the heroine of the opera; Bannister, senior, and Johnstone, were the two vocal heroes; Quick played a little fighting *Saracen*, called *Bantam*; and Edwin, a *knight errant with the gout*, bore the romantic appellation of *Sir Troubadour*. The songs, and all the original music of the piece, were composed by Shield; while the chorusses were selected from among the *chief d’œuvres* of Handel, and executed at a nightly expense of above thirty pounds. The scenery was entirely new, and beautifully painted; and the dresses and decorations were of the most splendid description.

Thus, it will, I think, be allowed, that the piece was not weak from the want of efficient supports; yet, I am bound in justice, and in candour, to declare, that a more mawkish *hotch-potch*, a more sickening *melange*, than the *Crusade*, was never offered to the public; and, even on its very first representation, was most properly named, by a *qualmish* critic, who sat next to my brother Richard in the pit, “The *Cascade*.”

Certainly, two or three circumstances occurred, on the first night of its performance, by no means conducive to its success. Edwin, who in the second act, was to have assumed the

disguise of a young Tartar Prince, and thus attired, to make love to the heroine, *Constantia*, being unable, from sudden, and great illness, to change his dress, actually wooed the beautiful Mrs. Billington in tattered armour and *flannel*.

But, our misfortunes did not stop here ; for, during Mrs. Billington's *bravura* in the last act, Mr. Billington, her husband, who was seated in the orchestra, conceiving that the trumpeter, did not accompany her with sufficient force, frequently called to him in a subdued tone, “Louder, louder!”

The leader of the band, being of a similar opinion to Mr. Billington's, repeated the same command, so often, that at length, the indignant German, in an agony of passion, and exhaustion, threw down his trumpet, and turning towards the audience, violently exclaimed,

“It be very easy to cry louder! louder!—but by gar!—vere is de *vind*!”

This unfortunate interrogatory, showed us where there was an abundance ; and a breeze ensued which had nearly, at once, upset my little bark.

On the third night, another untoward occurrence took place —That natural and delightful comedian, Tom Blanchard, who played the *Iman*, having on the two previous evenings, sung a very ineffective comic song, he was suddenly persuaded to substitute one, which he had sung with considerable success in another opera. In the hurry of the moment, it was never recollected, that in this *appropriate* introduction, there were allusions to the sale of *heart cakes* and *peppermint drops*—also to his dealings with the clerks of the Bank of England—and that one of the stanzas terminated with the following line :

“ And my name, it was A. B. in the Public Advertiser.”

Now a High Mahometan Priest, during the holy war, of 1098, singing about the Bank of England, and the Public Advertiser, was too glaring an anachronism, to escape chastisement, even from the most forbearing ; consequently, the *great bird** was let loose on the occasion.

* The *goose*—the theatrical cant phrase for hissing—this great bird, is generally ushered in by small birds—particularly *Tinnets*.

Owing, however, to the beautiful music of Shield, so splendidly executed by Mrs. Billington ; the excellent acting of Quick and Edwin, and to their irresistible humour in a duett, burlesquing, “O! thou wert born to please me,”* the *Cascade*, “dragged its slow length along,” during sixteen nights : for which I received two hundred pounds; but, calculating by what I lost in another quarter, (reputation,) I always conceived, that, owing to the *Crusade*, I had been borrowing money at 100 per cent.

The *Crusade* was the last new piece, in which poor Edwin ever performed ; constantly, and during its run, he was so ill, as to be unable to display, to any extent, his unrivalled *buffo* talent. That he rallied, however, during the summer, is evident from the following short anecdote.—One night, while I was sitting in the front row of the balcony box at the Hay-market, during the performance of the *Son-in-law*, in the excellent scene of equivoque, between *Cranky* and *Bowkit*, when the former, after making objections to the other’s offer to marry his daughter, observes,

“Besides, you are such an ugly fellow!”

“Ugly,” repeated Edwin, who played *Bowkit*: “ugly!” then coolly advancing towards the lamps, he cried, “Now, I submit to the decision of an enlightened British public, which is the ugliest fellow of the three—I, old *Cranky*, or,” (he continued) pointing to me, “that gentleman in the front row of the balcony box.”

Aroused by this appeal, I suddenly found myself changed, from a state of peaceful privacy, into the object of the laughter, scrutiny, and pointing fingers of two-thirds of the audience. Feeling a conviction that I had not sufficient bronze to stand an examination, I hastily fled, amidst the roars of the aforesaid enlightened British public, considerably less chagrined, I believe, that one of my competitors on this occasion—that sterling comedian, Parsons, who, that evening performed *Cranky*, and who, I afterwards heard, expressed great indignation, at the liberty thus taken with his person.

Many performers before, and since, the days of Edwin, have

* Then being sung at Drury-lane, by Kelly and Mrs. Crouch, with the greatest effect, in Milton’s *Mask of Comus*.

acquired the power, by private winks, irrelevant buffoonery, and dialogue, to make their fellow players, laugh ; and thus confound the audience, and mar the scene;—Edwin disdaining this confined, and distracting system, established a sort of *en-tre-nous-ship*, (if I may venture again to use the expression) with the audience, and made them his confidants; and, though wrong in his principle, yet, so neatly and skilfully did he execute it, that, instead of injuring the business of the stage, he frequently enriched it—the only possible excuse for “your clown speaking more than is set down for him.”

Poor Edwin died, October the 31st, 1790 ; and on the day of his funeral, his mourners, having (for the sake of taking a last look) ordered the lid of his coffin to be raised, they saw on his countenance, that same peculiar serio-comic smile, which was always wont to set the theatre in a roar. Though, I believe, as much fair genuine feeling is displayed at theatrical funerals, as at other funerals, yet I cannot dismiss the subject without stating, that, the only time, I ever followed an actor to the grave, on my expressing my surprise, at seeing one performer much more deeply affected than all the rest, another thus whispered to me,

“ He fears his own death will be the next *given out*.”

One more short anecdote, before I quit the subject of the *Crusade*. During the run of this opera, walking one afternoon on Windsor-terrace, I met Tom Blanchard, accompanied by his niece, a young unsophisticated creature from the country, who most anxiously desired to see the King. Awe struck, however, by the very thought of royalty, she trembled violently on the approach of his Majesty, and hiding her face, her uncle could scarcely support her. Bowing most respectfully to the King, the latter, in his most good-natured manner, pointed Blanchard out to his attendants, and then, advancing towards him, said—

“ What, Blanchard! you here?—Eh?—and at this hour! You have forgotten you play *Joppa*, this evening, in the *Crusade*”

“ Please your Majesty, I have not,” replied the comedian ; “ but I do not appear till the second act.”

“ Right,” rejoined the King, “ right, I recollect now—but it won’t do; *bad opera*, *bad opera*!”

During the summer of 1790, being attacked with a nervous disorder, I consulted Doctor Jebb, who ordered me an excursion to Cheltenham ; and then prescribed, amongst other remedies, quite as easily procured, tranquillity, entertaining society, and no contradiction whatever, on the part of my associates. In fact, *decided happiness* was prescribed ; to obtain which, Cheltenham must be visited.

Holman, then, the leading tragedian of Covent Garden Theatre, and, to quote from O'Keefe, “the same generous fellow I ever found him,” being engaged to perform at Cheltenham, he, and I, and a rich young merchant, named Turquand, (formerly a school-fellow of mine,) quitted London together. I proceeded with these two “composing draughts,” as they called themselves, without occurrence, or adventure, worthy of repetition, till we reached Slough ; when, on alighting from the carriage, and robberies being then very frequent in that part of the country, Holman unlocked his cases of pistols, and taking forth the two pair, charged and fired them, one after the other, in the inn-yard, before the post boys, crying out,

“ Let them come—twenty more, kill them—twenty more, kill them !

At length, by this, and similar conduct, the whole inn were perfectly convinced, that we were three brave, adventurous knights, pursuing a sport, neither uncommon, nor unfashionable at that time, *highwayman hunting*. My thoughts, however, being of a very different description, and perceiving that the sun was setting, I concealed in my neckcloth, a twenty pound note, leaving in my pocket, only two shillings, and a rumpled piece of paper, on which, was sketched a new Petrarchan sonnet, to be introduced the following season, in an intended alteration of the *Crusade*.

Holman having placed his loaded *quarteto*, in the post-chaise, we proceeded on our course ; the driver occasionally looking back at the supposed *banditti destroyers*. The time passed very merrily and gaily, Holman entertaining us with his Irish stories, of which he had a considerable collection. Amongst others, he related, that the previous summer, dining with a party in Dublin, where a furious theological controversy

occurred, B * * *, losing his temper, boisterously said to a stranger, who sat next to him—

“On which side, Sir, are you? Are you an Atheist, or a Deist.”

“Oh, neither, Sir,” was the immediate reply, “I am a *Dentist*.”

We had now passed Salthill, above a mile, and Holman was proceeding to relate another anecdote of this knight of the *Tuscan* order, when in the midst of our laughter, the carriage was suddenly stopped, the doors were thrown open with violence, and three footpads, whose faces were covered with crape; presented their pistols at our heads. At this moment, a fourth, who held the horses’ heads, being informed by the postboy that we were armed, vociferated “Fire! Fire!”

“Confound ye! don’t—don’t, my friends!” exclaimed Holman, wriggling, and twisting himself into the back of the carriage, with such force, and activity, as almost to throw Turquand, and myself into our antagonists’ arms.

“Your pistols, watches, money!” replied they, “or we will blow your brains out, you blackguards,” &c. &c.

The action being suited to the word, searching, pinching, and the butt-ends of their pistols, were put into requisition in so unceremonious, and forcible a manner, as to make the young citizen, who suffered the most, squeak from pain. Holman, to do his courage justice, (for no man was naturally more brave,) now seized a pistol, cocked it, and was about to present it at one of the rascals, when (*horresco referens*,) aware of the consequences, I, the nervous gentleman, snatched it from his grasp, and presented it, not *at*, but *to*, the nearest footpad. Observe, reader, I had not previously made a boast of my courage, but if I had, “valour comes, and goes,” and Alexander himself, after one of his drinking bouts, must have had a tremulous tendency on the following morning.

After the swearing, thumping, and searching, had gone their course, and after we had been plundered of every thing portable, we suddenly found ourselves in silence, and comparative calm; when, at that moment, I felt myself pulled sharply by the sleeve, and a voice loudly vociferated in my ear, “Sir,

Sir!"—The thieves again! thought I; but, looking in the direction of the sound, I discovered the postboy.

"What are they gone!" cried I eagerly.

"*Gone!*" he replied with the greatest coolness; "Bless you! they have been *gone* these five minutes."

I looked at him, and never shall I forget our interchange of looks on this occasion! In vain, indeed, did we all attempt to avoid his significant winks, and leers, as he was engaged in raising the steps, and closing the doors which the thieves had so unceremoniously thrown open.

"Nay, gentlemen," added the rogue with the most provoking sympathy, as he proceeded to mount his horses; "nay, gentlemen, do not be cast down this bout, for when you cross the Thicket, you will have more *highwaymen-hunting*; so had you not better *re-load* your pistols?"

I thought Holman would have leaped out, and annihilated the sarcastic varlet; but Turquand, and I interfering, and ordering him to mount, and drive on, we soon composed our irritated friend.

On comparing notes, as we pursued our journey, it appeared that Holman, had only two guineas left, out of twenty, and that the young merchant, out of fifteen, had only one. They, concluding that I was in a similar situation, were beginning to express their fears, that we should all be detained on the road for want of money, when I, triumphantly produced from under my neckcloth, my twenty pounds.

The truth was, that while Holman's, and Turquand's assailants were daring resolute ruffians, the footpad on my side, was, apparently, quite as *nervous* a *gentleman*, as myself. His hand, as he held the pistol trembled so violently, that I every moment feared I should be shot by accident; and when, in reply, to his trembling demands, I gave him my silver, the rumpled song, (which he probably mistook for a bank note,) one of Holman's pistols, and a fine map, belonging to Turquand, he conceived, no doubt, that he had obtained the most valuable booty of the three. And so, perhaps, he had, for the sonnet he stole from me, and which I stole from Petrarch, (set a thief to catch a thief) might have been deemed by the Law-

ras of these occasional *recluses*; the most valuable *plagiarism* of the evening.

We arrived at Cheltenham, where we mixed in such pleasant society, that the little health I gained by the waters, in the morning, was destroyed by the wine, in the evening. Then, as an additional aid to health, in order to avoid the usual watering place *ennui*, we were all obliged to fall in love; but, I soon found at Cheltenham, as I afterwards found at similar watering places, that just as the attachment is approaching its acme, the object is suddenly removed; not on account of the interest she takes in her lover, but because her mother's interest in her lodgings, has expired. Miserable matchmakers! Truly indeed, did an old pains-taking dowager speak, when, one morning, at the Wells, as I was sighing over the *last* departure of my *last* love, she whispered to me,

“Before her carriage reaches Gloucester, all tenderness for you, will be *bumped* out of her; and at the ball to-night, all your love for her, will be *danced* out of you.”

The old lady was right—*experientia docet*.

Holman was an extremely entertaining companion, and in every respect a most enlightened man; but what with his rehearsals, his studying, his acting, and their usual concomitant train of squabbles, his time was so occupied, and he was so wholly lost to me, that I soon discovered, that a theatrical person did not make the most amusing fellow traveller, in the world. On the nights, he acted, he dined early, dressed for his part, and proceeded to the theatre in a sedan chair. Previously, however, to his departure, he would frequently during the hot July evenings, walk in an exposed garden attached to our house, completely equipped as *Richard the Third*, or *Alexander the Great*; repeating the different scenes, and points, utterly regardless of the servants who stared at him, of the dogs which barked at him, or of the envious parrot, and peacock, that screamed at him.

Once, while pompously promenading, dressed as young *Ammon*, that most swaggering, foolish, and licentious, of all heaven's creatures—a cock;—unlike “the dazzling eagle,” perched on his beaver, and crowed, and stamped, and other-

wise most irreverently conducted himself. Our Macedonian hero, when he had dislodged his assailant, could not refrain from laughing: adding, that he would burlesque *Alexander*, on purpose to introduce this additional *hero*, and that, instead of the *Rival Queens*, he would call it the *Rival Cocks*.

One of Holman's friends at Cheltenham was the Honourable Mr. ——, a fashionable amateur actor. This gentleman often dined with us, and proved a most agreeable addition to our party. One evening, Turquand and I accompanied him to the theatre, where he left us to go to the ball.

As we returned home at midnight, we observed our amateur actor busily examining a large wagon filled with hay, which was standing in the street, without driver, hostler, or any guard at the heads of the horses. To our great surprise, we saw the Honourable Mr. —— put his foot on the spoke of one wheel; then after looking to see whether he was watched, raise it to another, thus proceeding till he had reached the summit of the wagon; whence with some difficulty, he stepped on the leads of a lofty bay window, partially covered with flower-pots.

For a few moments, neither I, nor Turquand, could imagine the object of this rash enterprise; but, soon the mystery was solved; for, our honourable friend raising his arm, and extending his cane, tapped gently at the window of the floor above. A young female, with a light, immediately appeared, and the *amateur*, in every sense of the word, kissed his hand, beckoned, and urgently implored admission. But the lady, instead of responding to these amatory gestures, vanished in evident alarm.

Our friend, after remaining a few short minutes in a state of doubt and expectation, seemed about to descend; when, the light re-appeared, and the window being opened, all rapture, he prepared to receive the expected angel in his arms; but, in her stead received, from some angry, though waggish inmate, such a bucketfull of water on his face and person, that, losing his balance, he narrowly escaped falling into the street. Hastily turning, he proceeded to step on the friendly wagon; when, at that moment, the unlucky wagoner, little conscious of the mischief he was causing, issued from a public house, and

smacked his whip,—the horses obeyed,—the wagon followed, and our honourable, but unhappy, *Amateur*, was left on the leads, to undergo a repetition of the *sousing*.

If he remained, he must have been half drowned; if he leaped down he would have been more than half killed. In this dilemma, Turquand and I, raising our voices, “like succouring forces to a town besieged,” told our suffering hero to patiently endure for a few more seconds, and we would bring him a ladder from a house repairing in an adjoining street.

Scarcely, “sooner said than done;” and our grateful friend tripping down, (during another repetition of the *aquatic* exhibition, and accompanied by half a dozen flower-pots,) actually drenched *us*, in his embraces.

As we walked home, he assured us, that this amatory rencontre was wholly accidental; that he had seen the syren undraw the curtains, and, as he thought, then nod to him. On this hint, he spake, and, like *Ranger*, *up* he went—how he came *down* is, I trust, sufficiently explained.

On the following morning, Holman rose almost with the lark, to perfect himself in the part of *Chamont*, which he was to play on the same evening. As he always rehearsed aloud, my young city friend, and myself, never closed our eyes, after he commenced his tragic operations. His voice was so powerful, and his utterance was so vehement, that in some passages he actually made our very beds tremble beneath us.

At length, abandoning all vain attempts to regain his former pleasant slumbers, Turquand rose, dressed himself, and full of an accumulated indignation, stalked into my room, thus exclaiming—

“I was very quiet in my quiet habitation in the Old Jewry, when you, Reynolds, asked me to a take trip to this infernal place; but when I consented, I little thought an actor was to be my companion. You know I have never liked theatrical people, since one of our old school-fellows was duped, and tricked by that theatrical Circe, Miss ____.* I do not say

* The young men of the period to which I now allude, when supping at the Bedford, Shakespeare, or any other tavern in the vicinity of the theatres, conceiving that an actress had *more* professions than *one* would often order the waiter to step to Covent Garden or Drury Lane, for such or such a celebrated actress.

that Mr. Holman, in his confusion, gave a valuable map of mine to the footpads,—

“No,” I interrupted, “because I plead guilty to that charge.”

“In that case,” rejoined my friend, “I regret that I recurred to the circumstance, but—”

At this moment he sneezed several times.

“There,” he continued, “this cold is another of my debts of gratitude to your friend, Mr. Holman; I caught it last night, when his cursed chum soaked us in his embraces. I do not mean to say there is any disgrace in associating with an actor, but, in this case, there is so much positive discomfort, that”—(here he sneezed again)—“that I am determined to proceed immediately to town.”

“Nay,” I interrupted again, “stay this one night, and we will go and see him play *Chamont*, which is one of his best parts. You will be delighted, your anger will vanish, and then we will plan better arrangements for the future, over a quiet, comfortable supper.”

The young merchant, naturally kind and good-tempered, very soon yielded to my entreaties, in the evening, we visited the theatre. As, during the play, I was careful to point out the merits of Holman’s performance, and as, between the acts, I expatiated on the many gentlemanly traits of his character, Turquand’s pique gradually subsided. All, therefore, proceeded calmly and satisfactorily, till the scene in the fourth act, where *Chamont* draws from *Monimia* her complaints against *Castalio*. The dialogue runs thus:—

“CHAMONT.

How!—did he

Dash thee disdainfully away with scorn?

I, myself, once heard one of these senseless puppies say to the waiter, “Get me more oysters, and Mrs. BARRY!” Our school-fellow, however, resolving to manage these matters more privately, and, as he conceived, more delicately, waited one night at the stage-door till the conclusion of the play; when Miss ——, then in the height of all her beauty and popularity, appearing, he slyly slipped into her hand, a twenty pound note. The lady looked at the money, then looked at the gentleman, smiled, curtsied, stepped into her carriage, and then—to the discomfiture and rage of our deceived friend—drove off alone; thus keeping his money, and according, I presume, to her conception, her own honour.

MONIMIA.

He did; and more, I fear, will ne'er be friends,
Though I still love him with unabated passion.

CHAMONT.

What, throw thee from him!

MONIMIA.

Yes, indeed he did.

CHAMONT.

So may this arm
Throw him to th' earth, like a dead dog despis'd!
Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy,
Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain
Light on me, if, Castalio, I forgive thee.

[Starting up from the sofa, and rushing forward.]

Here, Holman, partly owing to the energy of his action, and partly owing to the abrupt declivity of this small stage, lost his balance, and pitched headlong into the orchestra, fracturing a base viol, and drawing blood from the nose of the fiddler who held it. The noise and confusion were tremendous; but no assistance being offered to the unfortunate *Chamont*, I asked Turquand to descend with me, and jointly endeavour to aid our companion in his distress.

“No,” he replied, now rendered completely *enragé*, by the fear that a part of his disgrace might perchance attach itself to him, as companion—“No! this very night, I will return to London.”

He left the house, and immediately kept his word, never afterwards selecting an actor, as an *agreeable post-chaise companion*.

Holman, when he had recovered his legs, and found himself perfectly uninjured, laughed most heartily at the accident; and to all who inquired whether he were hurt, he answered gaily like the French dancing-master, “*Non—tout au contraire.*”

In a few days we left Cheltenham, and returned to London; the actor in every way benefited by his excursion, but Doctor Jebb’s nervous patient considerably deteriorated.

CHAPTER. XII.

PERILS BY SEA AND BY LAND.

“ It is but a folly to lie; for to speak one thing and think just the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way and to row another. Now, for my part d’ye see, I’m for carrying things above board; I’m not for keeping any thing under hatchee.”—*LOVE FOR LOVE.*

Soon after my arrival in town, I accompanied Andrews to his house at Dartford, a formidable abode; for, it was surrounded by the best, and, I believe, the most extensive gunpowder mills, in England.*

While there, Andrews and I chiefly passed our time, humbly imitating Beaumont and Fletcher in the completion of a comedy called *Better Late than Never*, which we had been writing together ever since my return from Cheltenham. Our agreement was, that I should receive one half the profits, and Andrews have *all the fame*.

“ Which had the better bargain?”

Topham also occasionally helped us; and in a few more weeks, the play was finished. Being offered to Sheridan, it was immediately accepted; and, accordingly, it was acted at Drury Lane for the first time on the 17th of October, 1790.

Kemble performed a part called *Saville*; Palmer, *Sir Charles Chouse*; Bannister, junior, *Litigamus*; Dodd, *Flurry*; and Mrs. Jordan, *Augusta*. With such a cast, there could be little doubt as to its success; and the first and second

* As a proof, that this abode was formidable indeed, I need only mention, that within a week after we left it, the whole of it was unroofed, and otherwise damaged, by the explosion of one of Andrews’ mills, with the magazine and corning-house. Such was the violence of the shock, that not a house in Dartford escaped its influence; many retained not one single whole pane of glass, and all trembled as if agitated by an earthquake. The foreman of the works, and six of the workmen lost their lives: and their remains were found at a considerable distance, terribly mangled. Every horse in the vicinity is said to have taken fright; and the report, at the distance of seven or eight miles, is stated to have resembled the regular fire of a man of war, but much louder. So much for the chance of repose in this rural retreat.

acts were received so favourably, that Andrews, who sat next to me, exclaimed in his exhilaration—

“Mind, my dear Sir, I am to have all the *fame*.”

The third act commenced and proceeded in an equally satisfactory manner, till, in a long, dull, scene, alluding to the appearance of the expected comet, some inappropriate and pointless jokes excited the reprobation of the audience. Dodd, who was the speaker, not having the *tact*, unfortunately, to *cut and run*, the prolonged continuity of absurdities, suddenly raised the awful cries of “off, off,” from every part of the theatre.

“Ahem,” said I to myself, “who is to have the *fame* now?”

With these words I left the box, somewhat more hastily than I entered it, Andrews followed close at my heels. We continued to wander about the theatre and green-room, afraid to resume our station until the fifth act. Matters then wore a more peaceful and promising appearance; and consequently, during the last scene, the acting of Mrs. Jordan produced so powerful an impression, that on the termination of the comedy, the voices of a few non-contents were drowned in the applause of the vast majority, and its second performance was announced for an ensuing evening, with something like a victory.

Yet, Andrews was much mortified; indeed, so was I, and we were still in the box, staring at each other, not in the best of all possible humours, when the Duke of Leeds (who wrote our prologue,) Sheridan and Topham entered together, all speaking at once, and all proposing alterations. Topham, however, took the lead, and in a friendly but decided tone exclaimed—

“Omit, in the first place, that deadly, dull, stupid comet scene.”

“Which scene, my dear Sir?” cried Andrews with particular irritation.

“Why,” continued Topham, “the scene where Dodd fatigues the audience with his nonsense about telescopes, and the Zodiac, and—”

“Stop, my dear Sir, stop,” interrupted Andrews, bursting

with spleen, "you are tiresome, Sir. You wrote that whole scene yourself, Sir, at Dartford. Did he not, my dear Reynolds?"

I replied in the affirmative.

"Well!"—exclaimed Topham, for an instant somewhat poised; but, he immediately added, "Probably, in the multiplicity of my affairs, and engagements, I may forget many things; but if, as you say, I did write that scene, Reynolds, or you, afterwards marred it, no doubt—In fact—I have always thought Dodd a wretched first night actor; but," he added, twirling his whiskers, "he will be better to-morrow; so, try the scene again!"

The Duke of Leeds, and Sheridan, then took their turns, and gave their advice; and the result was, that the comedy having undergone many of the proposed alterations and curtailments, was received on its second appearance, with considerable approbation. It was afterwards performed about eleven or twelve nights; and my share of the profits amounted to two hundred and twenty pounds; the whole of which sum, Andrews, punctually, and honourably paid me.

In spite of all Andrews' peculiarities, he had many most excellent qualities. Though, he was another illustration of that anomalous mixture of liberality and frugality, in the same character, yet, (and during our long intimacy, I had opportunities to judge,) the former, almost always predominated. As a specimen, of his paradoxical nature—he never ceased to complain of a dramatic writer, who fled to France, owing him three guineas, whilst, at a subsequent period, he volunteered lending another dramatic writer (myself)—three hundred; and under the following circumstances:—When on a visit to him at Margate, (knowing that I had lost at piquet and whist, much more than I could afford,) he followed me one morning to the sea shore, and there, whilst I was taking a melancholy walk, patted me on the back, and said—

"My dear Sir, it is quite disagreeable—I see you are fretting about your losses—therefore, in one word—unless you allow me to lend you three hundred pounds, payable at your own pleasure, I tell you, I shall be as uncomfortable and tiresome as yourself."

Another wealthy friend of mine, an M. P. of a similar disposition—a compound of liberality and thriftiness, having hired for a month, one of the best houses in Brighton, pressed me to pass the whole time with him—at the end of a fortnight, I was compelled to return to town on business; when, in a day or two afterwards, my rich and hospitable friend, being attacked with a nervous disorder, implored me to hasten back, and cheer him (as he was pleased to say) with my society.—I obeyed, and after having been most sumptuously entertained for another fortnight, to my surprise, on the day of my departure, he took me aside, and smiling said,

“ My dear Reynolds, I have been calculating, that your expenses during the month, at chambers, would have amounted to *three* guineas a week—now, as I intend only to charge you *two* guineas, you will acknowledge the curious fact, that you have rather *gained*, than *lost*, by a pleasant sea side excursion.”

Any companion, in my mind, is preferable to a dull common-place one; and that my friend Andrews may not be considered as one of these *unendurables*, I will yet add, another short anecdote of him.

After the ninth night of *Better late than never*, Andrews gave a supper, and invited to his house, not only Kemble, Dodd, Palmer, Baddely, and other actors, who played in the comedy, but King, Parsons, and many more distinguished performers. The Duke of Leeds, Lord Dudley, Lord Palmerston, and many other eminent personages were present; yet, notwithstanding all this apparent promise, the party, like the play, went off rather heavily.

To me, one of the most amusing persons present was John Kemble. This great actor, with all his good sense and good taste, was like Gay,

“ In simplicity a child.”

Certainly, no man was further from proving a dull, common-place *Unendurable*, than Kemble; as probably, the two following short anecdotes will evince.

Whilst Parsons told a rich comic story, at which, all laughed, Kemble preserved a fixed, grave, classical countenance—

but, when Dodd afterwards sang a pathetic ballad, which excited general interest, Kemble, in the middle of it, burst into an odd fit of laughter, and in a tone tremulous from excessive gaiety, said—

“ I beg your pardon, gentlemen, but I have just taken Parson’s joke—ha, ha!—and it is really—very good!”

This whimsical trait of character was so irresistible, that we all joined in his merriment, almost as heartily as himself. When, afterwards, he was requested, in his turn, to favour the company with a song, he was again equally *naïf* and entertaining.

“ Gentlemen,” he exclaimed, rising, “ I will most cheerfully give you the song of the Gods and Goddesses, repairing to the hunting of the hare; but, if I produce any humorous effect in it, (as I trust I shall,) you will please to ascribe the whole merit to the hints, I have received from one of the best comic singers of the day,—I beg leave to state, that I allude to Mrs. Siddons.”*

I do not know what comic effects this song might have produced on other occasions; but, on the present, the hunting “ Gods and Goddesses,” did not add to the sports of our party. Shortly after midnight, we all separated; and, as may be imagined, not from temperance, but satiety. As I was on the point of following them, Andrews abruptly rose, and stopping me, whispered in my ear,

“ My dear Sir, in this case, I shall let you off very easily. We will jointly write another play, and then it will be your turn, to pay for the supper—you understand?”

How a party that contained such entertaining and convivial characters, as Tom King, Palmer, Dodd, Parsons, and many others of equal celebrity, could manage to be disagreeable, is only explicable on the supposition, that

“ When wit meets wit, then comes the tug of war.”

Owing to the vanity of talent, and to the steady determination of each to eclipse his competitor, those very men who

* That John Kemble spoke as he thought, I have no doubt; and it must be recollectcd, that in her early days, Mrs. Siddons has frequently sung in *Rosalind*, in *W.W.*, in the *Devil to Pay*, and in other comic characters.

individually, or even in duets, are extremely pleasant, collectively, (like other corporate bodies,) become frequently, troublesome and unprofitable.

My brother, and old Morgan, not approving of half measures; *id est*, not being contented that I should only receive half profits as a dramatist, used regularly every morning to place before me pens, ink, paper, and the common-place book, in which, for some time, I had been collecting materials for a new comedy. Then, they used to request me, for my sake, as well as their own, to commence my trade again; and without, as Richard very complimentarily added, “the aid of a sleeping partner, Fred.”

That my readers may form some idea of this dramatic common-place book I will select the few following extracts.

“Tuesday—Invited again by my friend Barrington Bradshaw to dine at the Horse Guards—aware of their Bacchanalian pranks, went *prepared*. Beheld, as usual, arranged round the room, ‘dozens of port and claret.’ After dinner, all evinced a determination to make the play-wright drunk.

“It would not do—saw half of them under the table—and among the first, the person next me, a young page of the Queen. His breeches and stockings, before dinner, a brilliant white, were now discovered to be incarnardined—“one red.” Major Lemon, Mawhood, and Bradshaw, wondered how this strange circumstance could have occurred. So, did not I—mum!—had got Morgan to sew a *large piece of sponge*, in my dark coloured pocket hankerchief, which raising to my mouth with every glass, I slyly deposited above half the contents of the latter, into this *little tank*—then obliged occasionally to squeeze it, the aforesaid contents issued over the stockings and breeches of my insensible neighbour.

“Further to conceal this *ruse*, I frequently vociferated ‘Bumpers!—no heel taps!—buz!—I see skylight!’—to the astonishment, and even to the annoyance of these established toppers. Regarding me as a phenomenon, the whole mess at last confessed themselves beaten. As I handed Bradshaw down stairs he muttered out,

“‘I, and the Major, can carry off six bottles—but, zounds!

Reynolds, if you continue at this rate, you will shortly be prosecuted, for moving off a whole dozen *without a permit.*”*

“ Wednesday, went to the opening of the Pantheon, as an Opera House, and saw the opera of *Armida*. Splendid *coup d’œil*, having, however, one eyesore. On the stage, projecting from the wing, was exposed a considerable portion of an adjoining house, which, had been purchased by a rival manager, previously to the erection of the Pantheon, and though according to the nature of the scenery, it was appropriately painted over, is still continued an unwelcome guest, in spite of all the efforts of its host to dislodge it.

“ Thursday, went to dine with Cobb, at the old Beefsteak Club, held in a room at the top of Covent Garden Theatre, given to them by the proprietor. Forgetting their politics, I gave Pitt as a toast—Duke of Norfolk, Lord Suffolk, and others, would not drink it. Jack Churchill, who was as loyal as his brother, the poet, was rebellious, swore that they should; riot and confusion ensued. To prevent blood-shed, I whispered the president, that I intended a dramatic toast, “the *pit.*” Cheering, and the toast was drank by all, but Churchill, who reproached me, and sent me “*to Coventry*” the whole evening.

“ Supped in Gower Street; sat opposite the Honourable Mrs. ——; a fine, well dressed, pains-taking dowager, said to be a great likeness of Peg Woffington. Fancying that she trod on my toe, I returned the token, and received a furious kick in exchange. N. B. Do not dramatize her. Mem.—George Tierney’s singing,

‘ Who gave thee that jolly red nose?
‘ Nutmeg, and ginger, cinnamon, and cloves?’

“ Morris also, in his own “Town and Country” song, admirable.—Bird, likewise, excellent!—Still too much of a good thing. Quere—*private singing* best, perhaps, when altogether *private?* Begin without being asked, but having once begun, never stop; professionals do—why? because *paid by time.*

* Let the present race of *water drinkers* remember, this happened thirty-five years ago, when a *three bottle man*, was deemed little better than a *milk-sop*.

“JOKE—Midas, so great a man, that every thing he touched, changed into gold—altered case now, touch a great man with gold, and he will change into any thing.

“Lord D—— inquired of me, with great *sang froid*, whether I knew where his own sons intended to pass the summer? Mem.—Not unlike Lord Thanet’s story of a late Duke and his brother, entering an inn late at night, Duke undrew parlour curtains, and discovered a coffin; said nothing to his companion, but again drew the curtain; supped, and then retired to bed. Next morning on their road, overtaking a hearse, the Duke coolly remarked,

“‘Probably, that hearse contains the coffin, I saw last night at the inn?’

“‘I have no doubt that it does,’ replied his fellow traveller, thus proving, that he had also seen the coffin.*

“Cut up the *nonchalance* of high life, and also Lord ——, who with an annual income of forty thousand pounds, has never ready cash enough, to pay the loss of a guinea rubber.

“Quære—for novel characters, a *foolish* Yorkshireman, a *blushing* barrister, and a coquette dying in a *common* nightcap!

“Friday—went to Westminster Hall—nothing new there, excepting hearing Erskine say, to the astonishment of the young prigs, ‘Beauty is but a painted sepulchre.’ Also, heard an old *twaddling* special pleader (on a breach of the peace case) whom Lord Thurlow called a Hun, complain to the Lord Chief Justice, that women of the town, a few nights ago, had actually been seen parading close to the first police office in London; ‘Aye, my Lord, literally in Covent Garden!’

“Met my school-fellows, Lord Elgin, and George Byng,

* It may not be totally unworthy of observation to mention, that this odd story is likewise related in a tour published by a French traveller, who states that the Duke of ——, and his brother, saw a dead body. I always understood that they only saw a coffin, and probably I shall be deemed as *correct* as the above-named foreign tourist, when I add, that amongst other strange events, he narrates, that at a tavern near Covent Garden, he met a Mr. * * *, who told a story of his idol, Kean, having personally quizzed Garrick relative to the text of Shakespeare, when GARRICK died *eight* years before KEAN was born!

inadvertently touched on politics, and said every thing most unlucky. Quære—a character called *Mal à propos?*

“Met also a free and easy actor, who told me, he had passed three festive days, at the seat of the Marquis and Marchioness of _____ *without any invitation*; convinced, (as proved to be the case) that my Lord and my Lady, not being on *Speaking terms*, *each* would suppose, the *other* had asked him.

“Accompanied Mrs. Wells, the leading stage beauty, to Sir Joshua Reynolds', who, smiling asserted, that he was not only a painter, but a dentist; ‘for see, Sir,’ he continued, ‘how well I *draw* teeth.’—Q.? can this be *new*?

“Mem.—my dentist's incident. Catching lover hid under sophera, in his wife's boudoir—

“‘Rascal, what brought you here?’

“‘Why—wheugh!—the tooth-ache, to be sure!’

“‘Sit down, and we will see;’ and then *jealousy* cooled *love*, by the extraction of three sound teeth.

“Dined at Andrews', and met there the Duke of Leeds, Colman, Topham, Merry, and John Kemble. The Duke, occasionally partial to punning, said,

“‘His Majesty, by supporting the constitution, has proved himself a capital *upholder*.’

“‘Yes, but not a capital *Cabinet maker!*’ retorted Merry, forgetting that his Grace was Secretary of State. *Mal à propos* again!

“Andrews being unwell, and *ergo*, somewhat irritable, Merry told him, that he received illness, not as a *misfortune*, but as an affront. Kemble, not so amusing as before; no man, indeed, pleasant under the dominion of wine. He abused nobody, however; only praised himself; and heard Merry whisper me,

“‘I would go barefoot to Holyhead, and back, only to see a fellow, one half as clever, as he thinks himself.’

“Colman, as usual, playful and entertaining—Another guest, in the midst of this ‘chaos come again,’ constantly amused himself after every glass, by repeating

‘Who is a man of words, and deeds?’

‘Who?—but his Grace, the Duke of Leeds.’

“ Andrews, from anxiety, equally civil to every body—Topham (after many of his neat repartees) fast asleep—but occasionally awakened by the noise, yawning and muttering,

“ ‘ Reynolds is a *humourist*, not a *wit*—yaw! yaw! I am a *wit*!’ then relapsing into his slumber.

“ At twelve, all rose, and retired, excepting Kemble, who exclaimed, ‘ Stop some of ye! I see this is the last time I shall be invited to this house, so now, I will make the most of it!—Hear!—more coffee!—more wine!’

“ I was flying, but Andrews detained me, saying,

“ ‘ Leave me alone with this tiresome tragedian, my dear Sir, and *you* shall never be asked again!’ ”

“ More influenced by sheer charity, than by the threat, I consented to stay; and not till *ten* the following morning, did the curtain drop. Kemble the whole time lauding the classical drama, and attacking *modern comedy*. *Quære*—A *five act farce*, or a *ten act tragic monodrama*. ”

So much for my common-place book remarks; for which, if they be considered, as Andrews would say, “ tiresome,” I can only apologize in the words of one of our greatest poets,

“ To observations which ourselves we make,
“ We grow more partial for th’ observer’s sake.”

I now commenced gleaning hints, incidents, and characters for a new comedy, to be called *NOTORIETY*. I set to work “ doggedly,” and was daily reporting progress; when I was interrupted in the composition, by the return of my father from France, towards the close of the year 1790.

Our meeting, was to me most delightful, and I think I may say, it was equally gratifying to him. His circumstances compelled him to remain *incog.* and to pass at his lodgings in Norfolk Street, by the name of Ray. I found him, as I expected, full of French politics,—charged to the muzzle, with revolutionary combustibles.

Certainly, however, he did not approve of some of the sanguinary scenes he had witnessed, and of the many, which he had heard recounted. Nor did he carry his *ultra* patriotism

so far, as to exclaim, with a leading Whig, "the French Revolution is the most glorious fabric, that human wisdom ever raised." On the contrary, he would cry, in the words of the motto on his own coat of arms, "*Pulchrâ pro libertate,*" and not "*Sanguinea pro libertate!*"

Whilst he lauded the destruction of the Bastile, he expressed a sincere regret for the murder of the marquis de Launay, the governor and brave defender; and for that, of Monsieur de Flesselles, the mayor, and other officers, most faithfully fulfilling their duties. In reply to my interrogatories, whether there were really no more than five persons rescued from this terrific fortress, he replied in the affirmative; and added (what has since been frequently repeated) that one of them, who had been confined upwards of thirty years, cried to his deliverers,

"Having saved my life, gentlemen, the next favour I shall request, is either to take it away, or to carry me to another prison."

"This reminds me," continued my father, "of a King's Bench prisoner, who, when he got a rule for the day, always passed the whole of it in the Fleet."

Of all the French patriots, Mirabeau seemed to be my father's favourite; he said, that he was formed by nature, and art, to govern and direct a popular assembly; and that, like Wilkes, he could command a hearing from the most infuriated mob, when an orator of far greater talents, could not even have obtained the slightest attention. For Wilkes, like Mirabeau, instead of attempting to gain silence, by any verbose, circumlocutory appeal, proceeded at once to the point, in three charmed words—

"*Independence!—Property!—Liberty!*"

Pricking up his ears at this substantial prelude, the many headed monster would cease his brawling, and then, Wilkes, taking advantage of the pause, like another Mark Antony, would win him to his purpose.

Lord Effingham called during the course of the evening, most anxious to gain French intelligence. A traveller, returning from France, at that period, was certain that he should both excite interest and ensure attention;—how different is

the case now; if you attend to a cockney steam-boat sailor, just landed at the Tower from Calais, or a three pounds ten diligence adventurer, returned from Paris, what will they tell you? Why I do not know, for I never did, nor ever will listen to them.

Lord Effingham praised Louis the Sixteenth, for his mild and amiable disposition; but, at the same time, censured the feeble, and temporizing conduct, he manifested, on the most critical occasions.

“This system,” continued his Lordship, “must prove ruinous; for, as you yourself must know, Reynolds, even in the small scale of domestic life, *coaxing* never did, nor ever will agree, with either man, woman, or child.” And he then added, turning to me, “Did it with you, Fred?”

“No, my Lord,” I replied, “I am sorry to be compelled to confess, that you have good reason to know, that it did not.”

The conversation then reverted to the violent altercation which French politics had caused, between Fox and Burke; and my father was of opinion, that after what had passed, these two celebrated patriots, must continue opponents through the remainder of their career.

“Very probably,” answered Lord Effingham, “in the House of Commons, but not in their own houses. At least, judging by myself, for I know that I have frequently agreed best with those in private, with whom I have most differed in public.”

Lord Effingham, and my father, then proceeded to chat over old times, and to freshen their memories, by cracking fresh bottles. I retired to my chambers; more truly gratified by this renewal of natural family feeling, than by all the artificial splendid scenes, I had lately witnessed.

The following day, accompanied by my brother Richard, I had another gratifying meeting with my affectionate father; who, though now increased in age, and impaired in fortune, had lost none of his wonted humour, and eccentricity. I met him again every day till the end of the week, when he accompanied my brother John to his villa at Aldenham.

After this period, I never again saw Lord Effingham. Having been appointed Governor of Jamaica, he sailed for that

island, with his lady, almost immediately after the above-mentioned meeting. The chief cause of the acceptance of this situation, was the hope that a warm climate might benefit, if not restore, his own health, as well as that of the Countess.

For some time after his arrival, his Lordship's health appeared to be essentially improved by the change. On Lady Effingham, however, the climate produced no such happy effects, and gradually becoming more debilitated, and more attenuated, her medical attendants prescribed her, as a last resource, a *voyage round the island*.

During her absence, his Lordship's extreme anxiety concerning her, caused him to relapse; and he began to fear, that he should never witness the return of her, who in weal and wo, so long had proved herself, his faithful, fond companion. At length, the desired moment arrived; and the frigate in which she departed, appeared in the offing. Elated with hope and joy, Lord Effingham hurried to the shore; when, the captain landed, only to inform him, that that very frigate, bore the body of his beloved wife, who had expired only three days before.

Overcome by grief, in a state of stupor, approaching insensibility, his Lordship was conveyed to the King's house. There, buried in his chamber, secluded from the society of every human being, but his confidential valet, Jones on the close of the fourth day, he resigned a life, then only a burthen to him; and on the sixth day, he, and his affectionate Countess, (neither of whom had attained the age of forty) were deposited in the same vault.

The revolutionary mania daily increasing, though the reign of terror had not then commenced in France, thousands in England, became *alarmists*, and I was one, to an extent, not only most disagreeable to myself, but to every one of my acquaintance.—As a proof—after walking an hour, during this period, with Caleb Whiteford, (the inventor of cross readings, and secretary to Lord Whitworth during the American negotiation) I so completely infected this gentlemanly person, with all my terrors, that he quitted me abruptly, and encountering Holman immediately afterwards, told him, that though drama-

tically, I might be deemed a pleasant buffo, politically, I was a *fiend*!

Another friend of mine, now living, may remember, that as we crossed Westminster-bridge, at a late hour one night, on our return from Vauxhall, I suddenly stopped him, and pointing to the city, exclaimed,

“At present, all seems awfully quiet; but be assured, that some fellow, at this moment asleep, is doomed by fate to head a French revolutionary army; and in a few months will march to London, seize the Bank, stop our dividends, and poverty, famine, and despair—”

“Confound you!” interrupted my friend, “do you wish me to throw you, or myself, over the balustrades!”

“No,” I rejoined, “but I wish you to have foresight; sell stock, buy cloth, corn, or—”

“Or,” he interrupted, with increased irritation, “do what you ought to do with your cursed hypochondriacal feelings; run into the danger, as Congreve says, to avoid the apprehension. Go to France, that is the only place for you; for the very commencement of the cry ‘*à la lanterne*,’ and the first scenes of bloodshed, terminated all the woes and ailments of every ‘*malade imaginaire*’ throughout the kingdom.”*

Soon afterwards, a gleam of sunshine, raised the spirits of the anti-revolutionists. The King, with his family, had escaped from Paris, and for two whole days receiving no account of his capture, our hopes increased, and once again the royalists triumphed over the republicans.

During this period of suspense, I met Boswell walking with Burke. The latter, in his ecstacy, exclaimed—

“Come what will, we have had two happy days.”

He then added, that he had that very morning received private intelligence, stating that the white cockade had once more been boldly displayed in the streets of Paris, and concluded with saying—

* This assertion was strictly true. Afterwards, (during the commencement of the reign of the despotic *Guillotine*,) a French physician informed me, with a ludicrous appeal to my sympathy, that, owing to the number of invalids destroyed by this merciless engine, and to the whole race of hypochondriacs being *cured* by the fear of it, he had lost more than *three fourths* of his patients.

"Let him but pass the frontiers, erect the royal standard, and then—"

"And then," interrupted Boswell, "a certain *great* author will be compelled to retract, and acknowledge that the days of chivalry are *not* past."

The third day came "a frost, a killing frost," and my fit again. Louis was stopped at Varennes, and now it again became the jacobin's turn to triumph, but not over me; for after my previous swagger, knowing that I might expect no quarter from Merry and his colleagues, I made a political secession, and removed myself, and my new comedy, to the Isle of Wight.

I stopped however at Southampton, and took up my quarters at the Star Inn. Here, because I lived alone, I deemed myself quite a *solitaire*, when, in reality, I never mixed more in company; for, every morning I sailed in the mail packet, with thirty or forty gossipping passengers, to Cowes: there, dined in the coffee-room, afterwards chatted with military and naval officers till the close of the afternoon, and then, returned to Southampton, with an increased number of passengers.

Believe me, panegyrists of romance, cottages, and solitude, that nobody ever did or could exist without hearing the "human voice divine." If, at La Trappe, the monks only spoke one day in the week, they no doubt talked enough on that one to induce a satiety during the remaining six; and if, at Avignon, Petrarch did not daily visit Laura, most probably she, or some other Laura, daily looked in at the hermitage. To be sure, some superficial philosophers have asserted that "silence is a proof of love;" but, as this, in fact, is saying that no woman ever was in love, this vulgar error, like many others, ought to be considered as wholly unworthy of a reply.

At the end of a fortnight, I took a trip to the back of the Island, and in my way called on Mr. Wilkes, then residing at his villa, (late the property of General Heatherset) near Sandown Fort. We had not seen each other for some years, and I, consequently, found him peculiarly kind and entertaining. His dress, excepting in one instance, was perfectly Arcadian; instead of a crook, he walked about his grounds with a hoe, raking up weeds, and destroying vipers.

Observing that I admired his numerous collection of pigeons, he described to me the difficulty he had experienced in his attempts to make them stay with him. Every bird that he had procured from England, Ireland, and France, having flown back to its native land the moment the latch was raised, he was about to abandon his scheme as impracticable, "When," he continued, "I bethought myself to procure a cock and hen pouter, from Scotland; I need not add, that *they never returned.*"*

Wilkes then conducting me over the remainder of his grounds, showed me a large pond in his garden, which he said he had been compelled to have well stocked with carp, tench, perch, and eels; "because," he added, "fish is almost the only rare article by the sea-side."

He, however, praised the Newport market, which he regularly attended, and said that the *glance* from his eye, as he facetiously termed his squint, had done great execution with the farmer's pretty daughters in that quarter. "But," he continued, "my *glance*, I am sorry to say, has not every where met with a similar success; for, another person in the town, a lottery-office keeper, actually offered me, the other day, half a ticket not to pass and repass his shop-door, during the drawing; positively swearing, that since my visit to Newport, he could not calculate his losses at less than *two blanks to a squint.*"

As this probably may prove the only time I shall have occasion to allude to the subjects of lotteries and lottery-office keepers, I hope I shall be forgiven if I introduce here one short specimen of my authorship, in this *branch of literature*. The following, written to oblige a very honest, worthy indi-

* This sarcasm shows that Wilkes had not then, (if he ever,) thoroughly lost his antipathy to Scotland. The cause of dissension had struck too deeply to be easily eradicated; and to the day of his death, he usually spoke of Scotland as it was during the commencement of his and Churchill's career—

"When half-starved spiders fed on half-starved flies—"

And when—

"The plague of locusts they secure defy,

"For in three hours a grasshopper would die."

But the case is different now; for by the perseverance and industry of the natives, pigeons are as likely to fly to, as from Scotland.

dual, was inserted in most of the newspapers, soon after Buonaparte's marriage with Maria Louisa.

"The new Empress of France is particularly fond of reading the English newspapers, and one of her first questions to the Emperor after their union was 'who is CARTER?'

"To which Buonaparte liberally replied—

"'Not to know CARTER, argues yourself unknown. He keeps the Old State Lottery Office, No. 8, Charing-cross; and being, like myself, a favourite child of fortune, I propheey that he will this year sell the £30,000 prize: but, *do not mention this*, least it be taken for a *lottery puff*, and CARTER is above such hacknied practices.'

The conversation with Mr. Wilkes then returning to the politics of his times, I asked him in which of his duels he considered himself to have been in most danger? He replied—"In that with Martin, who, strange to say, during eight whole months after the supposed injury, uttered no complaint; but on the meeting of parliament, he spoke to me in terms that induced me to write a letter, which concluded with the following sentence.—'To cut off, however, every pretence of ignorance, I whisper in your ear, that every passage of the *North Briton* in which you have been named, was written by me.'

"To this, Mr. Martin, immediately replied, by a challenge to meet him, within an hour, in the ring, in Hyde Park; without offering me either the choice of weapons, or of place; so, I proceeded to the ground totally unconscious of the manner in which we were to fight. When he approached, he coldly bowed, and requested me to select two, from the four pistols he held in his hand. We had no seconds; and the space between us was remarkably short; I do not know the precise distance, for we did not measure it. Martin fired first, and missed me. It was then my turn, but the pistol I held, flashed in the pan. On my adversary's next fire, his ball entered my body; I fell immediately, and bled profusely. He thought, that I was killed, and approached to offer me his assistance. But the mist before my eyes, became so thick, I could see nothing distinctly. I told him, that I thought he had killed me honourably, and if I lived sufficiently long, I would leave a written testimony to that effect. I then begged, that he would make his

immediate escape. He departed, and I fainted ; after which I have no recollection, till I found myself on my bed.

“ The following day I returned him his challenge, that in case of my death, no evidence might appear against him. Some months afterwards, I met him at Paris ; and ever since we have continued on amicable terms.”

Wilkes pressing me to stay to dinner, I accepted the invitation. The lady, who lived with him, dined with us. She was nearly as plain as Wilkes himself ; so, though a *happy*, they certainly could not be called a *handsome* couple. After dinner, the servant brought in various London papers, and publications, in one of which, were bantering allusions to the worthy alderman and his beauteous *cara sposa* :

“ Ah, sure a pair was never seen
“ So justly form'd to meet by nature.”

His remark on the circumstance was very apt.

“ You see, Madam, the most censorious cannot say there is any *difference between us.*”

Late in the evening, I left my most amusing companion with much regret ; and on the following morning proceeded to the back of the island, and other parts of that “ garden of England ;” which however, has been so often, and, no doubt, so well described by the different Gazetteers, Ambulators, Delineators, *et cætera*, that I believe my slow muse may be spared the supererogatory task.

On my return to Cowes, I found there, my long expected friend, Morton ; who possessed in an eminent degree, those two qualities, so essential in a fellow traveller ; fine conversational talents, and fine temper. Though, not in the least conceited, as to his literary accomplishments, he yet in some respects, resembled his own pleasant character of *Bob Handy*, in the more ordinary occurrences of life.

One evening, soon after his arrival, he hired a rowing boat ; and, when we entered it, to my surprise, and that of the sailors, he dismissed them, observing, “ that he could conduct the enterprise alone.” For an hour, or two, we rowed about pleasantly enough, and nothing appeared to us less probable, than danger ; when, suddenly the town of Cowes, and the sun

disappearing together, we perceived, that during our conversation, we had been carried out by the tide, above a league and a half.

Not aware of our danger, I began to rally my Captain on his nautical experience ; but to do him justice, he had sufficient penetration to convert his former security into alarm, and he angrily retorted, "It is no joke, Sir, I assure you! Pull! pull!"

Then proceeding to set a spirited example, he gave one desperate stroke, and no more ; for the oar, instead of deeply entering the water, only slightly skimmed the surface, Morton, "*catching a crab*," lost his purchase, and falling back violently on the seat, the oar slipped gently into the sea. In attempting to recover it, I lost mine, and away they both went, (probably towards the Bay of Biscay) followed by us.

To render our misfortunes more complete, the rudder of our boat having been previously broken, we lay broadside to the waves, and though fortunately in this crisis they were not very magnitudinous, they would have been more than sufficient to have swamped a boat five times the size of ours, on the smallest increase of wind. As is usual, too, in these cases, each began to censure the other. Morton asked me how I dared pretend to row? "However," he added, "after your *impudence* in attempting to write a comedy, I cannot wonder at any of your proceedings."

"Never mind, Tom," I replied in a melancholy tone, "I Shall not again offend either you, or the town with another."

Owing to the darkness of the night, the increasing distance from the shore, and the surf that continued to enter our miserable cockleshell, I had now, almost wholly abandoned all hope of preservation. So indeed had Morton, and instead of further bickering, and wrangling, we sat opposite each other with all the melancholy helplessness and grief of the two abandoned babes, in the wood.

After a long pause, interrupted only by bitter sighs, and an occasional half expressed regret, we heard the welcome sound of oars. Determined, that we would be heard in our turns,

we exerted our voices, in no inconsiderable degree ; and the boat approaching, the crew received us into it.

As we returned, these sailors who it appeared, had come out on purpose to rescue us, gave us a lecture, that I do not think either Morton, or I shall ever forget. By their account, the whole town of Cowes, had been with their glasses watching, and enjoying our retrograde movements.

“Who are they?” was the general exclamation.

To this the dismissed Jack Tars, naturally provoked that we had (to use their own terms) taken the bread out of their mouths, jeeringly answered,

“Mess! don’t you know, gentlemen? They are the two great *naval characters* from Batter-sea, who, last week, being about to be shipwrecked on the Millbank shoals, threw over all their ammunition, stores, and provisions ; that is, their snuff-boxes, opera-glasses, tarts, and umbrellas.”

Amongst others, who expressed more curiosity concerning our names, and rank, than anxiety concerning our perilous situation, was Lord ——, a member of the Cabinet. Being informed that one of the unfortunate mariners, was a very popular dramatic author, (Morton being then *only* a gentleman,) he coolly replied, as he returned to his house,

“Perfectly in character : he has brought a full house, and must be considerably gratified by the amusement he is imparting to his spectators.”

But the efficient friend, the real *Sam Tac* on the occasion, was an old pilot, who gallantly swearing, that we should not see Davy’s Locker, this bout, ordered his comrades to “bear a hand ;” and then putting off, overtook us, as has been related, about a league from Spithead.

As we returned, we cut most pitiful figures ; and the attempts that we made to insinuate ourselves into the graces of our preservers, only made matters worse ;—we offered to assist them in rowing! With a most whimsical expression of countenance, and an exaggerated gratitude, the old pilot declined our proposal ; and from that moment, continued to banter us, until, to our great relief, we reached Cowes, just as the church clock struck two.

Proceeding straight to our lodgings, we knocked up our landlord, when after having experienced "the dangers of the seas," we ate a hearty supper, went to bed, and never even dreamt of short allowance, watery graves, Algerines, or any other of old Neptune's *agreeables*.

The continuity of fine weather induced us to make another aquatic excursion ; but, cautious as "burned children," we engaged two sailors, and even with them, confined our voyage to the river Medina. Being sportsmen, as well as mariners, we took with us our guns ; but, we met with no *sport* till our return.

As we entered into the harbour, we saw several loungers awaiting our approach, in the expectation that additional amusement and exposure, would result in some way or other, from this second cockney expedition. I am sorry to be compelled to add, that their mischievous hopes were not disappointed.

Being high water, and spring tide, the boat lying within a foot of the level of the surface of the quay, approached close to its edge. Morton, and the sailors, stepped on shore, and I proceeded buoyantly to follow them ; but, chattering and laughing with one foot on *terra firma*, while the other remained on the edge of the boat, it suddenly receded, and I made a spring forward ; when, such was the consequent re-action, that I began, Colossus like, to stretch wider and wider,— the more violent my efforts to advance, the more rapid the boat's tendency to retire ; till, at length, extended over a chasm of incredible width, almost split into two, casting around one pitiable, imploring glance, I abandoned the struggle, and calmly dropped into water, *ten feet deep* !

Fortunately, perching on the narrow causeway, (purposely constructed to accomodate passengers at low water,) and almost the whole of my head, remaining above the surface of the sea, I was soon released from my unpleasant situation, and hauled on to the quay, amidst the enthusiastic applause of another "crowded and fashionable audience." In the midst, however, of this whole combination of untoward events, to me the annoyance *par excellence* was, that as I hastened home-wards, sighings tottering and dripping, Morton, the Harlequin

of this pantomime, now in the distance, now close to my elbow, continued to sing,

“ One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing, constant never,
Then, sigh not so
But let *him* go—
And be *he* blithe, and boany,
Converting all *his* songs of wo,
Into Hey, nonny, nonny.”

One other short aquatic anecdote, and the subject shall not be again recurred to. Crossing in the packet, on a dark, tempestuous, autumnal evening, from Cowes, to Southampton, we were hailed not far from Calshot Castle, by a vessel sailing from Portsmouth to Cowes.

“ What cheer, messmate?” cried our captain, through the musical tones of his speaking trumpet.

To which, the Portsmouth commander replied, through an instrument equally *harmonious*,

“ Heave out your boat astern, and relieve a passenger!”

“ What is his distress?”

Answer,—

“ He wants to see Mr. Holman act *Hamlet* to-night, at Southampton.”

At first, Morton and I, pronounced this a capital puff of Holman’s; but on the boat returning, a young dramatic enthusiast came on board; who informed us, that he had expected to have reached Cowes before our vessel sailed, but the Portsmouth packet had been delayed by the weather.

Now, it is well known, that on signals of distress, boats put to sea, and frequently, their brave crews risk their own lives for the preservation of others; but, that, during stormy weather, a vessel should be hailed for the relief of a distressed stage-struck solitary individual,—that, a ship should be called, like a hackney coach, and the Captain, urged to hoist more sail, lest a front row should be lost, surpassed in *cockneyism*, even our marine absurdities.

On our arrival at Southampton, the waiter of the Star Inn, informed us, that Mr. and *Mrs.* Holman, (new, and formidable name!) having gone to the Theatre, had requested us to order

supper for them, when we ordered our own. We obeyed their commands; and, after the close of the play, they arrived; but, unfortunately for the conviviality of the evening, *Mrs. Holman** brought with her, a third person, a most unwelcome guest;—"The green eyed monster."

It appeared, that during the acting of the play, *Hamlet* had kissed *Ophelia*; an operation that the lady maintained, was contrary to the intentions of the author, and must result from some tendencies in the actor. Holman defended himself, by quoting Macklin, who, after the speech, ended with, "To a nunnery go!" always saluted *Ophelia*—and contending that such was Shakspeare's intention, added—

"Though Garrack parts with her like a brute, I choose to leave her like a gentleman."

"This reasoning is most glaringly fallacious, Mr. Holman," exclaimed our critical, jealous lady; "Macklin could never have supported so erroneous an hypothesis; for, could he forget, Sir, that the King's first remark, after having watched this interview, is

"Love!—his affections do not that way tend."

"For shame, Sir! Not only in *Hamlet*, but in *Jaffier*, and *Romeo*, you invariably forget the author, in thinking of the actress! And, Sir, allow me to tell you this conduct is no longer to be endured! I have been patient, very patient—and now—I'll——"

Bursting with rage, vexation, and wounded vanity, the lady quitted the room. Holman, with that weak temporizing maxim in his mouth, "any thing for a quiet life," foolishly followed her, to try the effect of the coaxing system. Excuse me, ladies, but if a favourite lap dog went mad, and flew out of the room, would any of ye be so unthinking as to try to coax it in again.

On his return, after the conclusion of a miserable truce, to be broken with impunity, on the first caprice, by the stronger party, Holman endeavoured to palliate her conduct, saying,

* Holman some years after married Miss Hamilton, niece to Sir William Hamilton, and sister to the Countess of Aldborough.

"that notwithstanding she occasionally displayed bad temper, it always ended *speedily*."

"Yes," I thoughtlessly rejoined, "but, as is usual in these cases, it always commences again, as *speedily*."

On this, as may be expected, all my friend's restrained rage, exploded on me; and, although, I was indifferent to the majority of his attacks, on one point, he completely vanquished me. He had heard it publicly stated, in the Green-room of the Birmingham Theatre, in the presence of Mrs. Pope, Mrs. Mattocks, and others, that a love entanglement, of no ordinary nature, was preparing for me—that a certain handsome, celebrated actress, had fixed her mark upon me—and there being no chance of escape, Holman began triumphantly to expatiate to me, on the horrors of the *coaxing* system, "the green eyed monster," and all the other entertaining *et cæteras*. It was now my turn to fight on the defensive; and, though numbers would have literally gloried in this desirable conquest, leaving the room, I retired to bed, with feelings, similar to those of *Fatima*, after she had seen the *Blue Chamber*.

CHAPTER. XIII.

WOMEN, AND WARS.

“ Un homme dont le plus grand defaut fut d’être timide, et honteux, comme une vierge.”

LES CONFESSIONS DE J. J. ROUSSEAU.

ON my arrival in town, I found, that the lady did not “ protest too much ;” and she, who, in point of beauty, was certainly, the leading theatrical star ; she, who had rejected the overtures of half the rank and fashion in London, now, from some unaccountable cause, preferred to the whole crowd of pains-taking aspirants, an alarmed, and nervous author.

Self-interest, certainly, could not have had much influence in this proceeding ; for, as I have before stated, I could neither boast of personal, nor pecuniary attractions. Indeed, with all her failings, and who is perfection ? this lady had no mercenary feeling, no second profession, which judging by late examples, was probably the principal cause of her deficiency in individual attraction ; still as an actress, she possessed considerable comic talent, and in some parts, shone unrivalled. But, by a few anecdotes, which will be narrated, in the progress of this work, it will probably be shown, that she displayed even more humour in real, than in fictitious, life.

During the month of October, the Honourable Thomas Twisleton, Topham, Andrews, Benjafield,* Merry, Morton Holman, and myself, formed a club, called the “ Keep the Line ;” which was held weekly, at the Turk’s Head Coffee House, in the Strand.

That it was no grave matter-of-fact club, I think will be made evident by the following rule, selected from others, all equally whimsical, and extraordinary :—

“ If any member insult another by giving him the lie, or

* A Captain in the Army, and the proprietor of that leading journal of the day—*The Morning Post*.

by otherwise grossly provoking him, the member so insulted, shall immediately rise, and satisfy the aggressor, by immediately *asking his pardon*. This rule to extend to visitors."

Such a strange regulation, in course, occasionally produced confusion: the lie being frequently given, solely for the purpose of producing the apology from the insulted; particularly if he were a visitor. Yet, with all its absurdity, this rule, not only promoted much amusement, but often prevented many serious misunderstandings.

The club so rapidly increased in popularity, that in the course of a very short period, the following gentlemen were proposed, and elected:—Const, Fitzgerald, the Honourable Berkley Craven, Rogers, (the poet,) Richard Sharp, Wilson, (the surgeon,) Lewis, (the comedian,) John Bannister, Tom Sheridan, Charles Anguish, Linley, the Honourable John, and Henry Tufton, Smith, (reputed author of the *Rejected Addresses*,) Sir John Dryden, (grandson of the poet,) the Reverend G. Moultrie, Charles Moore, (brother to Sir John Moore,) Morris,* (author of the comedy of *The Secret, &c.*) Boaden, John Taylor, Kenney, Pope, Fawcett, Franklin, Heath, and many other convivial characters, whose names, if I did recollect them, would be too numerous to mention.

By another rule equally absurd, "Every member, on publishing a literary composition," was bound, "to give a dozen of claret to the club." Topham, Andrews, Rogers, Merry, Morton, and myself, regularly paid the fine without opposition; but, the choice spirits of the club having asserted that it should be inflicted on Wilson, for an advertisement announcing the commencement of his course of lectures, and on John Tufton, for an address to his constituents, a discussion ensued, "the house divided," and the majority of votes deciding that both were *literary* compositions, the two unwilling authors were compelled to pay their appointed fines.

Shortly after the commencement of this club, the comedy of *Notoriety* was read in the Green Room; when Lewis, Quick, Munden, and Mrs. Esten, all liking their parts, the stage business proceeded with such unusual concord, and with

* Afterwards Master in Chancery, Member for Newport, and married to a daughter of Lord Erskine.

such expressions of satisfaction from all parties, that for once in my life, I found a rehearsal, an agreeable morning lounge.

Many of the inexperienced, (particularly in my day,) suppose a rehearsal a delightful treat, so abounding in pleasantry, and love-making, that a permission to enter behind the scenes, would appear to them, equivalent to a permission to enter Comus' Court. As a proof, that this is no very uncommon opinion, I will repeat the substance of a conversation that once occurred between me, and an officer of rank, and fashion, in the Guards.

"I suppose, Reynolds," he cried, "that the moment, the curtain drops, the actors, and actresses, all commence romping with each other?"

"Quite the contrary," I replied; and then laboured earnestly to convince him, that there was quite as little love, and quite as much bickering, envy, and dulness, within, as without, the walls of a Theatre. But in vain were my attempts; the gentleman persisted in deceiving himself, and shaking his head, declared,

"That I evidently knew nothing of the matter; for, that after the liberties, *Romeo*, only last night, took with *Juliet* before the curtain, it was ridiculous to suppose, that he would stand on much ceremony *behind* it."

One of the actors in *Notoriety* having a very thick, and another a very weak voice, Mr. Harris, who attended all the rehearsals, called them "*Bubble* and *Squeak*."

To the late Mr. Harris, I am indeed materially indebted for the success of this comedy. He proposed many important alterations, curtailments, and additions; all of which, both by author, and actors, were immediately adopted. We knew that he had had experience, and we knew that he had profited by it; his taste was unexceptionable, and his judgment was never sullied by prejudice. Mr. Harris was simply manager, not actor also; he worked for the *general* interest, regularly, giving *Hamlet*, or *Macbeth* to that performer, whom he thought, would best amuse the town, and, consequently, bring most money to the Treasury. Whereas, such is the infirmity of human nature, such the love of *self*, that frequently, when the manager is also an actor, he conceives he is signing his own

death-warrant, when compelled to cast another performer for a principal tragic, or comic character.*

To this hypothesis, it may be objected, that Garrick was a most successful manager.—Granted:—but has any such personage appeared since his time, or is it probable, that any such personage will soon again appear? Should such a glorious epoch arrive, and the new planet soaring, above all competitors, surpass, alone, all their united attraction, then let him take the chair, “Nor quit it till ye place an equal there;” but until then, ought not the audiences to ask, “Why should the *dry rot* be allowed to enter the Theatre in the shape of any *would-be* Garrick?”

The comedy of *Notoriety* was produced on November the 5th, 1791; and principally owing to the excellent acting displayed in it, was most favourably received. Of this play, I can only say with Congreve, “I could have pointed out many more faults, than even the critics did.” In Andrews’ epilogue, spoken by Lewis, there were some successful points; particularly, the following, alluding to a fashion of the Bond Street beaux, of that period:—

“ Hey Tom, how do? Oh!—is that you, Dick Docket?
“ You’ve stole my stick—no, sounds, it’s in my pocket!”

Morton also contributed to aid *Notoriety*, by writing the comic song, so admirably sung by Johnstone, in the character of a Frenchified Irishman called O’Whack, the following stanza was particularly effective:—

“ Oh, I kiss’d a *grisette*, who halloo’d out, ‘ *Ah, fie done!*’
And yet I consol’d her all night, and all day;
To be sure, and I was not her sweet Irish *Cupidon*,
Her ‘ *petit mignon*,’ and ‘ *Milord Anglais*;’
But, when she found out, *sans six sous* was poor Pat, Sir,
It was, ‘ *allez miserable diable John Bull*;’
So, I e’en gave this blarneying Frenchified cat, Sir,
Of good, wholesome shillaly a complete stomach full!
“ With their *petites chansons*, ‘ *Ca ira, ça ira*,’ ‘ *Malbrook*,’
‘ *Miranton*,’ and their *dans votre lit*;”
“ By the pow’rs they’re all nonsense and bodder, aghah, to our
Didderoo, ‘ *bubboroo, whack, langolce*.’”

* I speak of *Actor-managers* both in town, and in country—acknowledging that some *can* resist temptation.

This was Morton's first dramatic attempt; and its success inducing him to proceed, he has often since reproached me, as the cause of his entanglement, in the theatrical labyrinth; that he is both the first, and the last, person who has considered this charge, as a fault, I believe his own justly popular comedies will afford sufficient evidence.

By my agreement, with Mr. Harris, after deducting one hundred pounds for expenses, I was to receive the profits of the third, sixth, ninth, and twentieth nights; on one of which, the following awkward circumstance occurred. On the opening of the doors, Richard and I, all ardour for the cash, entered the slips, (upper boxes,) for the purpose of watching the filling of the house, and by counting each individual to ascertain to a shilling, the receipts of the author's poor box.

The birds, at first, entered very slowly; after awful intervals, only a solitary one perched upon the pit benches. Suddenly, a party of seven entering together, my brother again resumed his usual tone, exclaiming,

“By Jove, Fred, this is a profession indeed! Now flocks will follow.”

To a certain extent, he was a true prophet; for, before the “commencement” of the “last music,” the pit was nearly filled, and the galleries also. Proceeding then, to make a rough calculation with my pencil, we had ascertained, that there was already above one hundred pounds, received over the charges, when the stage door opening, Davies, the actor, advanced, and with a low bow, and a melancholy countenance, thus addressed the audience:—

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Mrs. Esten having been suddenly taken ill, Miss Chapman, at a short notice, has undertaken the part of *Honoræ*; and, consequently, respectfully hopes for your usual indulgence on this occasion.”

Much appearance of discontent, but according to custom, between those who were restrained from hissing, by shame, and those who were restrained by principle, a silence ensued, interrupted only by the plaudits of the few, who wished to encourage the substituted actress; when, instead of leaving the stage, Davies, the usual messenger of woe, bowed again, and again commenced:—

“ And, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mrs. Wells having also, been most suddenly taken ill, the manager most respectfully hopes, that you will allow her character to be read by _____”

“ What!” interrupted several voices from the pit, “ *two* at a time, Davies?—No, no!—Off, off, off!—Manager!—Manager!”

Poor Davies attempted to explain, but not a word could be heard, and the disturbance rapidly increasing, Lewis was compelled to appear. After some vain conciliatory attempts, he, at length, most unwillingly acceded to their demands, viz.:—that the *money should be returned* to those who were discontented.

This concession produced a universal calm, and as universal satisfaction to every body, but me and my brother, who was particularly indignant, asserting, that, as money was never returned in the law, it certainly should not be returned in a profession so infinitely superior. He added, that he would immediately rush to the doors, and give notice to this effect; but, after considerable persuasion, I induced him to remain with me, and then, in our anxious eagerness, we betook ourselves to the miserable employment of counting *out*, what we had just so happily counted *in*. My brood, or rather my *blood*, so rapidly disappeared, and the holes in the pit became so horribly conspicuous, that I could scarcely refrain from saying with Macduff:—

“ All!—what all my pretty chickens,
“ At one fell swoop!”

The result was, that I lost nearly three hundred birds *in hand*, who flew away to settle on their own domestic, or some other theatrical *bush*; and the receipt, instead of considerably exceeding two hundred pounds, as we had expected, only amounted to one hundred and sixty pounds. Notwithstanding, however, this accident, the comedy being performed above twenty-one nights, my profits altogether produced me upwards of four hundred and twenty pounds.

One word more relative to this comedy. Topham and I, jointly, wrote a prologue, which, for obvious reasons, we feared to have spoken, when it was finished. The subject was

humbug, and the few following lines will display the character :—

“ Yet coffins will *take in* the coffin-maker,
“ And death, at last *humbugs* the undertaker.”

Then, after other instances of the supremacy of *humbug*, it proceeded thus :—

“ Who can alone great *humbug*’s power defy,
“ *You*, who are born to conquer, or to die?
“ ’Twas English liberty made despots feel!
“ ’Twas English valour crushed the proud Bastile!”

This, naturally was expected to have produced the loud applause, which regularly accompanies these trumpery trap-claps, and then, it was intended, the speaker of the prologue, should have advanced to the lamps, and added :—

“ Ha, ha!—you’re caught, and not by something new!
“ Go!—*humbug* others, as I’ve *humbugg’d* you!”

This light anecdote is mentioned to show, that past audiences were considered, as not a jot less inclined to enjoy the *pleasures of humbug*, than those, of the present day. However, Mr. Harris, in spite of all his love for eccentricity and originality, wisely put his decided *veto*, to this irregular mode of prefacing, a play that many might also have considered as a *humbug*.

During this winter, I was confined to my bed, for six long weeks, by a violent rheumatic fever; and several times, such was the severity of this acute complaint, all hopes of my recovery were abandoned. But, at length, owing principally to the consummate skill of my medical friends James Wilson, (the surgeon,) and John Churchill,* I was pronounced free

* This gentleman had a considerable portion of the strong talents and wit of his brother, Charles Churchill, the poet; and in many other respects, much resembled him, though, as has been before mentioned, directly opposed to him in politics. In society, he was a most amusing, enlightened, and agreeable man abounding in anecdote and humour. One, of his light repartees I well remember. At the period, when those buckled appendages of the neck, stocks, were exchanged for the less expensive fashion of the present day, a friend asked Churchill what could have caused the sudden rise of cravats? “ The *fall of stocks!*” he replied.

from danger, and preserved, like another Orlando, “to fill up a place, which might have been better supplied, had I made it empty.”

Though, during my illness, I underwent considerable pain, and many privations, yet, such was the unwearied attention of those around me,—silently catching and watching every look with the deepest anxiety,—such their daily, nightly, interminable endeavours to assuage my sufferings, and anticipate my wishes, that imperceptibly I began to regard my bed as a *throne*, myself, as a *sovereign*, and my kind attendants as my *slaves*—so much so, that I am ashamed to say, when I was pronounced convalescent, I felt almost as much chagrin as gratification. Seated in my arm-chair, I lost half my despotic power; and a successful airing depriving me of the remainder, in a few days, such was the increased familiarity of those I encountered, that, notwithstanding all the annoyances of indisposition, I occasionally sighed for my former pompous situation, and the *sovereignty* of a sick chamber.

On my recovery, I was advised to go into the country; accordingly, in the middle of January, with snow, a foot deep on the ground, I chose for my retreat, the solitary farm-house, close to Netley Abbey. There, I ruralized, but, like other recluses, not exactly alone;—I was accompanied by the before mentioned celebrated actress, who, being suddenly involved in pecuniary difficulties, found this dreary spot, sufficiently retired, during this desolate season, to skreen her from the most active pursuers.

Though, during the height of summer, Netley Abbey, for a few hours, is a most interesting, gratifying object, yet, when the wintry winds, cutting from the shore, rush in hollow sounds through each lone arch, day after day, and night after night, while the moon occasionally peeping through a black and stormy sky, displays leafless trees, and the snow capped ruins of this venerable pile, the mind which cannot assimilate itself to all the beauties of such wild, romantic scenery, withdraws from the awful object, and becomes gloomy, restless, and desponding.

The farm-house also, being only a sort of less ruin, and our sole companions being “mice and rats, and such small deer,”

who constantly interrupted each interesting *tête-à-tête*, we soon began to experience with Lysander, that—

“ The course of true love never did run smooth.”

The farmer and his wife, by their cold suspicions and their bearing towards us, did not tend to diminish the truth of this observation. Owing to my fair companion’s fear of being discovered, she never stirred out; and this circumstance, conjoined with her mysterious concealment of her name, so excited our *Hampshire host’s*, (I might, without great injustice, write *Hampshire hog’s*,) curiosity, that, one day to a neighbour asking who we were, he surlily replied—

“ Dang it, that’s what I do just want to know; and if, as I suspect, d’ye see, that they be player folk, icod, I will whip them up before the squire under the *vagrant act*.”

We did not wait, however, for the execution of this threat; for my friend’s pursuers discovering her retreat, we were compelled suddenly to shape our course elsewhere. Having paid the farmer even more than his demands, and made presents both to his wife and servant, we found him, now that we were about to depart, very civil; and as we stepped into a closely covered cart, which we hired to avoid publicity, evidently convinced by this Thespian vehicle of the nature of our “callings,” he said with much warmth—

“ You see I have no *pride*, not a bit of the *gentleman* about me; so that,” (snapping his fingers) “ for the disgrace; and if ye do again come this way, and want your old quarters, ye shall have them d’ye see. Odraten, though I be *whipped* at the *cart’s tail* along with ye.”

After travelling during a snowy and tempestuous day, over dreary and rugged cross-roads, we arrived late in the evening at Winchester. The following night, passing secretly through London, we proceeded towards France, the grand dépôt for English labouring under pecuniary embarrassments.

Arriving at Calais in the middle of March, 1792, it might be anticipated that the gloom we had contracted, during our abode at Netley Abbey, would soon be dispersed, by the extraordinary *qui vive* of the French nation, most particularly at that period.

The last time I landed at Calais, I landed peaceably, and was

received with civility; but since the REVOLUTION, the French having decided that politeness attached to its possessor a suspicion of aristocracy, and that rudeness was a necessary concomitant, and a principal evidence of *sans-culottes* liberty, and *sans-culottes* principles, this time I experienced a material change.

The moment we cast anchor in the harbour, at least forty *poissardes*, rushing into the water, waded towards our vessel. Whilst I stood stupidly watching their movements, and wondering at their motives, about half a dozen, who had swarmed up (without my observation) the other side, came suddenly behind me on the deck, and lifting me off my legs, as suddenly dropped me into the arms of certain of their fair associates, who were standing breast high in the water.

In spite of my entreaties and expostulations, two of my supporters bore me triumphantly to the shore, and deposited me, more than half drowned, and bursting with spleen, on the foot of the perpendicular ladder leading to the summit of the pier. Here, for a moment, I thought my sufferings had terminated; but, I was soon undeceived, for, determined to conclude in an equally happy style the politeness they had so happily commenced, one of my tormentors seizing my hand, proceeded to mount, dragging me after her: while, the other followed banging and propelling me behind, and otherwise most indecorously conducting herself, as she continued to vociferate—

“*Montez miserable!—allez—vivement!—depechez donc!*”

These unaccustomed, and certainly undesired courtesies so excited my sensations, and so tried my activity, that a tenfold return of my late rheumatic twinges made me nearly faint. Having however reached the summit of the pier, and having been thrown on it, “like a dead salmon into a fishmonger’s basket,” my persecutors left me, and hastened away to procure more victims.

Amongst others who soon arrived by this light and elegant conveyance, was my equally nervous companion. She was bursting with wounded pride and suppressed indignation at this first indignity; but, having condoled with each other, somewhat more composed, we both directed our steps towards the Silver Lion.

There again, however, it soon appeared that we had left the

land of genuine freedom, to encounter, under the mask and name of liberty, every species of modern despotism and licentiousness. Our first business was to change our damp and muddled garments; when, being informed that dinner was then just served at the *table d' hôte*, to save time and trouble we joined the party, which consisted chiefly of officers, at least, of people in military dresses.

As the “*petites tourtes*” were placed on the table, I was called from the room, owing to the *customary* custom-house confusion, and there, compelled to attend to the arrangement of some disputed points, during a few minutes. When I returned, all impatience to rejoin my fair fellow-traveller, my eye searched the room for her in vain—she was gone. Applying to the waiter for information, he told me that the lady had retired to her own private apartment, and expressed the most anxious desire to see me.

Thither, therefore, I repaired ; and found her both deep in rage and grief ; to use her own expression, “she had been insulted.”

“The moment you quitted the room,” she continued, “these sons of equality and commonalty, conceiving, I suppose, Sir, that I was also common property, one and all rushed towards me, and I only escaped their insolent gallantries by taking refuge here.”

She having acknowledged that I was not exactly the person to call a whole revolutionary *table d' hôte* to account, I attempted to diminish her affliction by describing the sufferings which I myself had endured only since we had parted. Whilst I was hastening along the Grande Place, a little imp of a boy, in a *bonnet rouge*, but more than half naked, threw a live kitten at me, which, alighting on my shoulder, continued to cling to my shirt collar with the most agreeable pertinacity, till the little jacobins desiring me to shout *vive le nation*, released me from the clawing monster; and then, singing *ça ira*, *ça ira*, proceeded on their way to perform a similar operation on the next person, whose respectable, but unfortunate dress, might induce a suspicion of the wearer's aristocracy.

The following morning, we directed our course to the banker's, in the Market-place ; and we there, received, for twenty

guineas, twelve hundred and eighty livres in assignats ; thus, clearing by a part of our freight, on a voyage of only twenty-one miles, nearly two hundred per cent. It is true, that assignats were at a slight depreciation ; but, as no Frenchman dared refuse to receive in payment the Government money, after living most sumptuously during three whole months at one of the best hotels in France, I found that Milord Anglais, for once, had the best of it, and had *gained* money by a continental excursion.

The mind of "*me chere et belle amie*" having been seized with the romantic idea of settling in a convent, at least, in the event of my return into England, I accompanied her to one, near the Grande Place. Ringing the bell, the gates opened, and the sombre porter ushered us into a gloomy parlour, hung with tattered tapestry. I need not add, that I felt neither the awe nor delight which oppressed me, when I had received the permission to enter the Paraclet.

Now, that her purpose was about to be effected, my intended recluse's fears of seclusion were such, that involuntarily imbibing a considerable portion of them, I gazed, with something like alarm, on that end of the dreary chamber, where a large iron grating was covered behind with a dark green curtain, which, when withdrawn, would evidently discover a part of the interior of the convent.

Doubting, whether we should remain, or escape, I was yielding to the inclinations of my fair friend to the latter proceeding, when, our steps were arrested by the sound of the organ, and the chanting of the nuns in the distance ; I looked at my friend, and she looked at me, but neither of us spoke ; when at that moment, the curtain being withdrawn, and the interior discovered, the Superior of the nunnery, in all the imposing grandeur of full costume, suddenly appeared before us.

Not until after a repeated interrogatory on her part, could I muster sufficient self-possession to inform her, in a broken voice, and in more broken French, that the state of health and mind of the lady, who had the honour to stand before her, requiring repose, she much desired to enjoy it, for a short time, within the walls of this sacred asylum.

The *grande religieuse* bowing assent, with silent but encouraging dignity, I again ventured to proceed :—

“ My friend, Madam, will most cheerfully and strictly conform to all your rules—and then the terms—the payment Madame ?”

Here the Superior, casting on us a full penetrating look, and then withdrawing her eyes, and raising them slowly and solemnly towards heaven, as if absorbed in deep contemplation, I began to fear that this worldly remark had excited her indignation : when, at that moment, to my utter surprise, she calmly and solemnly exclaimed,

“ Pray, does the lady find her own *tea* and *sugar*? ”

Now, as some may probably consider this statement exaggerated, I beg them to remember, that at this period, a Calais convent more resembled a Bath boarding-house, than a Catholic religious house—more a preparatory-school for young English ladies, than a receptacle for old French vestals, any one of whom, as Mrs. Cole says, “ would have done my business,” though not exactly according to the meaning of that honourably lady.

When we had quitted the convent my companion, instead of expressing any desire to return there, proposed that we should immediately repair to the theatre. The pièces were, *Nicodème en Lune*, an amusing satire on aerostation, and an entertainment, never before performed, founded on a local event of a melancholy nature, which had occurred a few weeks before. A French sailor, in gallantly attempting to save from shipwreck the lives of several other sailors off the Calais coast, lost his own life, and his death being witnessed by his intended bride, (the daughter of a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood,) the circumstance made so much noise that the manager immediately employed an agent to dramatise it.

Expectation being thus excited, the house was crowded, and the curtain to the new piece having risen, the heroine entered to slow music ; when, to my astonishment, instead of creating interest, she caused a riot, and from every part of the theatre suddenly arose the cry of “ *Directeur, directeur!* ”

This gentleman soon appeared, and apparently in considera-

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ble alarm, humbly stated his anxiety to know the cause of their exclamation. Owing, however, to the number and vehemence of the furious orators, who, all at once, answered this interrogatory, the manager could not, for a considerable time, understand the subject of this "*tintamarre infernal*." But when he did, he shrugged up his shoulders, exclaiming, with a look of horror, as he hastily quitted the stage,

"C'est impossible, Messieurs—C'est impossible!"

As may be supposed, my horror was even greater than the manager's; when, I also understood from an Englishman near me, that these revolutionary cannibals, not contented with seeing the heroine of the piece represented by the first serious actress in the theatre, actually insisted that the part should be performed by the *bride herself*!

The idea that the poor farmer's daughter, in a state of affliction bordering on despair, should be dragged from her retirement, on to a public stage, there, to outrage the dearest feelings of her soul, by mimicking her own sorrow, was to me so repellent, that, at first, I could scarcely believe a desire to execute it was entertained, even by these sons of French liberty, and anarchy.

I was soon, however, undeceived; for the riot increasing to a most alarming height, the manager, having no other resource left, was compelled to send for the officers of the municipality.

A party of them soon arrived, and the chief, (a person, apparently, of at least eighty years of age, and decorated with all the insignia of office,) taking his seat in the front row of the box next to me, and importantly commanding silence, half the pit rushed towards him, to the great detriment of the persons and clothes of the more peaceable part, to explain, and complain of the arbitrary conduct of the aristocratical manager.

The old gentleman shook his head, and persisting in preserving the peace, proceeded to harangue them; when, they immediately interrupting him, a most animated discussion ensued. During a full quarter of an hour, I could catch nothing but the words, "*Liberté—égalité—la voix du peuple—a bas*

les tyrans—vive la nation—vive la loi—vive les magistrats!" Suddenly the whole theatre resounded with acclamations, and the chief officer, advancing his tremulous hands over the box, the mob in the pit seized them, and gently lowering him, they conducted him to the centre of the pit; where, forming a circle, they all danced round him, shouting the chorus, while the enthusiastic octogenary as fantastically danced, and wildly joined in the revolutionary song of "*Ca ira, ça ira!*"*

On this most unforeseen termination of the affair, the manager had no alternative, but to make a second appearance on the stage; and, after a most ample apology, with promise of "better things" for the future, he most humbly requested them, again to receive their money. This *petition* was *granted*, without much entreaty, with infinite condescension, and there, the matter terminated; neither the bride, nor the bride's representative, being ever afterwards troubled on this strange occasion.

Such, was the state of France, during the early stage of the revolution, and it needed no ghost to come from the grave to convince me, or any other eye-witness in the year 1792, of what would prove the termination of a system, which aimed at the destruction of one *supposed* individual tyrant, solely for the purpose of establishing a hydra headed faction, consisting of thousands of *real* tyrants—who, poor pretenders!—(as has since been seen,) were all of them only ephemeral "kings in their turns." Though few can carry their admiration for the *bienveillance*, and *bonhomie* of Louis the Sixteenth's character so far, as to think, with one of his biographers, that he surrendered himself at Varennes *purposely*, and solely, to "prevent the effusion of blood, which his return, at the head of an army would cause among his still dearly beloved, though ungrateful subjects," yet, thousands must admire him sufficiently to believe, that over any other nation, but *that* nation, one

* This old gentleman was not at the head of the whole police at Calais, but the director of a particular detachment—a sort of superior Dogberry, or constable of the night; and "though time was, that when the brains were out the man would die," afforded in himself a convincing proof, that in particular cases this deficiency only renders the animal more vivacious.

of whose smallest peccadilloes I have just had the honour to describe, he would have reigned in peace, and happiness.

Love, in my case, being that sort of liberal ally, that he did not monopolize the whole of my day, I now commenced writing another comedy. But, the scene around me being too completely anti-comic, to allow of the least chance of success in that branch of the drama, after a few futile attempts, I abandoned the danger, and turned my thoughts towards a serious opera, to be called **PETRARCH** and **LAURA**.—Dull pair! and as I soon found, decidedly undramatic!

I then tried, as a lively contrast, to dramatize my little French apothecary, and François the waiter; the former, whatever our complaints, invariably prescribed the same English medicine,—“*Jaymusses' poudres*;” and the latter used to find a delightful gratification for his hatred to royalty, by constantly replying to every inquiry of mine, concerning politics, or any other subject,

“*De King, and de Queen!—dey shall die,—presently!*”*

* As I shall not again recur to the French revolution, I will insert here, another instance of impotent revenge superior to that of poor François'. The ninth of Thermidor, (when Legendre, Tallien, Barras, and others, terminated the life of Robespierre, and the lives of the majority of his party,) was followed by the re-action of popular feeling. The horrid cries, and threats of the relations of the murdered during the reign of terror, now seemed to threaten an immediate and piecemeal death to the surviving murderers.—But how, did this raging volcano of passions at last find vent?—Why, “*mirabile dictu, in a—Ball!*”—a ball, that was intended to be the *El Dorado* of fashion, and *ton*, and from which all their opponents were to be excluded.

None were admitted who could not prove the loss of a father, mother, brother, sister, husband, or wife, during the reign of terror; or, that they themselves had been imprisoned, or proscribed. This ball was held during the winter of 1794, on the first floor of the Hotel de Richelieu, and received the singular, but appropriate, name of the **BALL OF VICTIMS**.

The dancers were compelled to attend it in the deepest mourning; the hangings were entirely black; and black crape was attached to the fiddles, chandeliers, and furniture.

The terrorists, however, were determined not to yield without a desperate struggle; so they instituted a rival ball, called, **THE BALL OF EXECUTIONERS**; which was held in the second floor of the Hotel de Richelieu, and to which no member was admitted that could not prove himself *guilty of some glaring revolutionary crime*.

The dancers were compelled to attend it in the brightest red; the hangings

At last, at the end of three months, to our mutual joy, we received a letter from England, stating that pecuniary matters had been arranged on the part of my fellow traveller. Consequently, we left *la terre du terrorisme*, the following morning, and arrived in the land of commerce, and comfort, *honey, and money*, the same evening.

Within a few months after our arrival in London, the wild and eccentric character of my fair fellow traveller, which had lately been subdued by her pecuniary distresses, again broke forth with additional violence. In a romantic spot in Sussex, she formed a hermitage, and, like Charles the Fifth, and Madame de la Vallière, she determined, in the full blaze of her power and beauty, to lead a life of seclusion.

were entirely red ; and red cloth, and silk was attached to the fiddles, chandeliers, and furniture.

Perhaps it may be imagined, that when the members of the opposite balls encountered, blood flowed?—Quite the contrary;—their bows were low and formal, and their compliments were paid in the loftiest style of revolutionary fraternity.

At the **BALL OF VICTIMS**, a ludicrous incident occurred. During the reign of terror, if the person intended for destruction was not to be found, some prisoner, whose name was similar in sound, or who was connected with, or related to, him, supplied his place! and then the name of the proscribed was erased from the fatal list, and his death published.

This was the case with two ladies of the name of De ——. Both had evaded their persecutors; but, the names of both were on the list of the guillotined, and each therefore, considered herself the only one saved. Their screams of horror, and astonishment, when they met at this ball, alarmed even the gay, and callous dancers. Convinced, however, that neither was a ghost, they embraced, and each congratulated the other on her happy preservation.

While they were thus locked in each other's arms, the master of the ceremonies approached them. The death of the *other* was the title, on which *each* had received her ticket of admission. Then addressing the elder sister, asked her, whether she could name any other relation who had perished during the reign of terror?—The lady hesitated for a moment, and then answered that she did not think she could. The same question being put to the other sister, she also replied in the negative.

“ Then, *Mesdames*,” said their interrogator, “ I have the sorrow to inform you, that you are no longer members of this ball.”

The two ladies stared in silent astonishment and chagrin.

“ It is delightful, to have found a sister,” at last cried the elder, taking the younger by the arm, “ but,—it is melancholy to have lost one's *free admission*.”

The principal portion of this detail, I received from the late Mr. Sayre, one of whose friends was a member of the **BALL OF VICTIMS**; and the other portion I extracted from a very amusing (if horrors be amusing,) French work, entitled, “ *Les Annales du Terrorisme*.”

This circumstance excited so much conversation in the neighbourhood, and every body so anxiously and loudly expressed their desires to see the fair recluse, that the rumour thereof at last reaching her ears she philanthropically resolved, before she shut out the world for ever, once more to indulge its curiosity,—and give a *masquerade!*—convinced, as she afterwards told me, “that though few would come so considerable a distance, to a quiet, wealthy, country lady’s party, yet a *hermitess*, giving a masked *féte champêtre*, would collect all the country; nay, all England around her.”

That her speculations were not incorrect, was afterwards clearly shown; and such, was the effect, which her beauty, singing, dancing, and dramatic talent produced on all her masqued beholders, that, during the remainder of her stay in Sussex, the leading toast throughout the whole of that populous county, was the “charming *theatrical recluse*.”

From this retreat, she returned to London; where, appearing on the stage every evening, in a new and popular character, and where, exhibiting herself on the Serpentine drive, every morning, in a new, and conspicuous chariot, with four fine horses, outriders, and the usual paraphernalia of a splendid equipage, she so increased the number of her admirers, that, at last, her very success became a source of chagrin. She was then indeed, “the glass of fashion, and the mould of form;” and yet, at that very period, restlessness, fidget, and eternal love of novelty, and extremes, inducing her again to wander, I was now compelled to accompany her to Dr. Willis’, in Lincolnshire; having, as she asserted, at length discovered her real complaint; and that was—madness!

When we arrived at Gretford, (the Doctor’s residence,) on my hastily stating to him, amidst the frequent interruptions of my fellow traveller, and with a confused and wild manner, the cause of our visit, the Doctor evidently considered me, as the patient; and, that this was not a very irrational conclusion, is apparent, as the postboy, who had driven us from Market Deeping, had entertained a similar idea. Indeed, what with the contagion of the scene, and the incongruity of the conversation, I believe, that out of the whole four, (lady, postboy,

doctor, and myself,) each, for a few minutes, thought the other mad.

The result was, that Dr. Willis laughed heartily, at what, he called, her frolic ; and then, recommending the usual English remedy for restlessness, the seaside, gave us a hospitable invitation to dine with him.

Gretford, and its vicinity, at that time, exhibited one of the most peculiar and singular sights I ever witnessed. As the unprepared traveller approached the town, he was astonished to find almost all the surrounding ploughmen, gardeners, threshers, thatchers, and other labourers, attired in black coats, white waistcoats, black silk breeches and stockings, and the head of each "*bien poudré, frisé, et arrangé.*" These were the Doctor's patients ; and dress, neatness of person, and exercise, being the principal features of his admirable system, health and cheerfulness conjoined to aid the recovery of every sufferer attached to that most valuable asylum.

The Doctor kept an excellent table, and the day I dined with him, I found a numerous company. Amongst others of his patients, in a state of convalescence, present on this occasion, were, a Mrs. B——, a lady of large fortune, who had lately recovered under the Doctor's care, but declined returning into the world from the dread of a relapse ; and a young clergyman, who occasionally read service, and preached for the Doctor. Nothing occurred out of the common way, till soon after the cloth was removed ; when, I saw the Doctor frown at a patient, who immediately hastened from the room, taking with him my *tail*, which he had slyly cut off. Others laughed, but I did not ; for I remembered. "*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*"

After taking a cordial farewell of the kind Doctor, we followed his advice, and the next day directed our course towards a new marine retreat. *Retreat* indeed!—for, as if waking from a dream, I found myself, one fine August morning, in company with my lively friend, at a place that might have been most correctly denominated the "*World's end.*" It consisted of only a lighthouse, and a few small cottages, inhabited by smugglers, and situated on the wild and desolate coast, of the north-eastern part of Norfolk.

Being, at least, ten miles from any market-town, I occasionally, during the day, suffered all the horrors of famine, and always, during the night, felt as if I were sleeping in a military *bivouac*, our abode being then the habitual resort of smugglers,—snapping their pistols,—practising with their cutlasses,—drinking, swearing, and vowed destruction to every custom-house officer within ten miles round, and to any unhappy interloper, who might be so unfortunate as either to mar their designs, or excite their suspicions.

All these agreeable manners, customs, and conversations, which were *death* to me, were only *life* to my fair recluse. She entered so thoroughly into the scene, and took so much delight in it, that, at last, by her cheerful conversation, and frank manners, conjoined to her liberal contributions, she rendered herself almost as popular among the “unlicked cubs” of this barren spot, as among the polished *petits maîtres* of London. Still, however, here, as at Netley Abbey, the wonder was, who could we possibly be? Some thought we were rich French refugees, whilst others guessed, with *Scrub* in the *Beaux Stratagem*, “We were spies.” But here, as at the former place, for a considerable time, their curiosity received no satisfaction.

One day, my facetious friend, like another Lavinia in beauty, “though in dress not unadorned,” having gone to glean in some fields attached to a farm-house, above a mile from our residence, about the time that I expected she would return, I went to meet her. On approaching the field, I was much astonished to see the farmer, his wife, and all his dependents and many of the neighbouring peasantry, advance towards me, bowing and curtseying with the most profound respect. The Lady Lavinia accompanied this grotesque, and outlandish groupe; and, to the increase of my amazement, began with much seriousness, and theatrical gesture, to address them in broken English. The surrounding confusion was such, that of her speech, I could catch nothing, except the frequently repeated words, “*Dauphin*,” and “*Jacobin*.” But not a syllable she uttered, seemed to be lost upon her awe-struck auditors, who continued to approach towards me, with even lower, and more awkward obeisances; when, the farmer advancing be-

fore the others, motioned them to keep back, and then falling on his knees, he hastened to disburthen his brain, by exclaiming, in a voice of thunder,

“Dang the Jacobites!—Long live the *Dolphin!*”

My surprise, and astonishment may easily be imagined; but, perceiving by the not-to-be restrained laughter of my friend, that some imposition had been practised, I prepared to undeceive them, when the “arch deceiver,” informed me aside, that she had revealed to them, with the strictest injunctions to secrecy, that we had only just escaped from France, and that we were no less personages, than MARIE ANTOINETTE and the DAUPHIN!

That, with the aid of broken English, conjoined with her beauty, her fanciful dress, and elegant appearance, she should succeed in making these artless countrymen believe she was the *Queen*, is easily to be imagined; but, that any persuasion could induce them to conceive me the youthful *Dauphin*, surpassed even my most exaggerated ideas of rural simplicity.

However, my Lady Lavinia had so won upon her hearers, and had so skilfully managed her wagery, that ignorant of the prince’s age, and of the very meaning of his title, but convinced by her speciousness, of the truth of her assertions, all, at the same moment, proceeding to imitate the example of the unsophisticated, and enthusiastic farmer, rapidly advanced, and in the hope of touching the hem of my garment, or kissing the tip of my finger, pressed so hardly upon me, that, to prevent a precipitate overthrow, my *Royal Highness* was compelled to make a hasty retreat; they all hastily pursuing me, at the instigation, and to the great delight, of *Her Most Christian Majesty*.

During the whole remainder of the evening, we both enjoyed the jest; but, the following morning, we began to feel the recoil. During our walk, we were surrounded by crowds of gazers and petitioners; amongst others, was a drunken, strolling manager, from a barn ten miles distant, who, almost on his knees, implored not a *be-speak*, but a *royal command!*

Though this circumstance only added to our amusement, yet, as it showed us the publicity our story was gaining, and as we foresaw, that the first rational person would detect its ab-

surdity, and might attach to it improper motives, we determined that very night, to quit this antediluvian place, instead of the following morning, as we had intended; and thus, by a voluntary abdication of royalty, prevent a forcible dethronement.

I cannot conclude this chapter without mentioning another of the whimsicalities of this extraordinary, but disinterested being. Some ten, or twelve years ago, referring to an old common-place book, that had remained in concealment till it had almost doubled its own thickness in dust—to my astonishment I discovered in the hand-writing of my friend, in one of the first pages, the following pathetic exposition of her state of mind, during the *four* years of our intimacy—

“I am, and have been, during the last *four* years, the most unhappy woman living.—Calais, April 1st, 1792.”

At first I was much shocked, and thought, “Are all your protestations come to this?” but on maturer consideration, recurring to the *day of the month*, in my opinion, I was no *fool* in supposing the intention was most satisfactorily explained.

CHAPTER. XIV.

CLUB WIT, AND PRACTICAL JOKES.

“Ludere qui nescit campestribus abstinet arvis
 “Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive, quiescit;
 “Ne spissæ risum tollant impune corone.”

HORACE DE ARTE POETICA.

“Avaunt the man who knows not how to wield,
 “The sportive weapons of our cricket field,
 “The bat and bounding ball, and *manual joke*;
 “Avaunt!—nor dare our mirthful club provoke.”

DURING April, 1793, my third comedy, called “*How to grow Rich*,” was performed. “Catching the manners living as they rise,” I introduced in it a place-hunter, a dashing attorney, a faro banker, and a country banker, characters then entirely new to the stage.

This dramatic *newspaper* was well received, and its attraction continued till the end of the season: my friend, Fitzgerald, supplied me with a very poetical prologue, and Andrews, in the epilogue, again rendered me essential service, particularly by his allusion to the PAD, a projection worn indiscriminately by maids, widows, and wives, and productive of the universal idea that half the women in London were in that state “that ladies wish to be who love their lords,” or rather, in that state in which “many lords do *not* wish their ladies to be.”*

* In the “*Nouvelles à la main*,” is the following picture of the origin of this fashion. “During the contentions in the year 1794, Madame Tallien did not enjoy undisturbed the dictatorship of the fashions, envious and factious rivals often opposed her. Among these, Madame de Beauharnois, the gay widow of the guillotined Viscount of the same name, was most ingenious and most active; though, at first, not the most dreaded. Having better shaped legs than well formed arms, (the pride of Madame Tallien,) the Countess, under a clear muslin dress, wore flesh coloured satin pantaloons, deeming petticoats superfluous; at the same time, lowering the sleeves of her gown to her elbows, and concealing her hands and the rest of her arms in gloves. Madame Tallien, in revenge, wore gowns without sleeves; and still further to bear up against the attack of the silk pantaloons, otherwise proportionately diminished the concealment of her neck and

In the epilogue was the following couplet:—

“ What lading brother?—why, the *pad*, Miss Sophy—
“ I’ve made a seizure, and see, here’s the trophy.”

As he thus spoke, Lewis produced from under his coat, this singular appendage to the female dress. The whole audience receiving this broad discovery with good humour, the effect was electrical. But *now*, with our present *correct* spectators! does the actor live who dares risk not only the loss of his profession, but of his life, by a similar exhibition?

Supported not only by Lewis, Quick, and Munden, but by Mrs. Pope and Mrs. Esten, who can wonder that on the aggregate of the profits of the third, sixth, ninth, and twenty-first nights, and the copyright conjoined, “ *How to grow Rich*,” produced me six hundred and twenty pounds.

During the run of this comedy, some very bad congratulatory verses written in very *irregular* measure, having been inserted in the newspapers, Topham said—

“ Reynolds, your friend seems determined to go *all lengths* to serve you.”

Notwithstanding this success, and my natural propensity towards the drama, yet it at this period only afforded me a secondary pleasure. The love of a mere pastime—of *cricket* was the first; and at length increased to such a height, that the day I was proposed as a member of the Mary-le-bone Club, then in its highest fashion, I waited at the Portland Coffee House to hear from Tom Lord the result of the ballot with

shoulders. These fashionable skirmishes entertained many, and scandalized but few of the republican *beau monde*; though the partisans of short sleeves lampooned those of long gloves, and the *cabal* of *under petticoats* wrote epigrams on the motives of the *wearers of pantaloons*. Every thing remained unsettled, and a civil war was judged inevitable, when the fair Viscountess, inventing the fashion of an artificial protuberance, *en avant*, her determined rival immediately responded by a larger, *en derrière*. The extreme of either being thus judiciously balanced, hostilities and a treaty of amnesty were concluded, and the year 1795 was not distinguished by any more of these terrible dissensions.”

I have heard my friend, Wilson, the surgeon, assert, that during the succeeding three years reign of “ *NATURE* and *NUDITY*,” or the “ *Grecian Costume*,” as that absence of *all costume* was called, more young women died of pulmonary affections than had ever previously been known in an equal space of time. But what signifies death, provided death is *fashionable*?

more anxiety than I had experienced the month before, while expecting the decision of the audience on my new play.

Being unanimously elected, I immediately assumed the sky-blue dress, the uniform of the club, and soon thoroughly entered into all the spirit of this new and gay scene. The members then in the club, who were the most regular in their attendance, were the late Duke of Richmond, the present Lord Winchelsea, Lord Darnley, Lord Cardigan, Lord Frederick Beauclerc, the Honourable John and Henry Tufton, General Bligh, and Richard Leigh, (a gentleman of large landed property in Kent, and the great match-maker,) the Duke of Dorset, Sir Horace Mann, the Honourable Thomas Twisleton, Charles Anguish, Pawlett, Louch, and Dehany.

The club was also occasionally attended by the present Marquis of Hertford, the late Lord Thanet, and sometimes honoured with the presence of the Duchesses of Richmond and Gordon, Lady Wallace, and other ladies. Such was the *dramatis personæ* of what often proved in representation, "*A ryghte, pythy, pleasant, and merie comedie.*"*

Before, however, I introduce my readers to the members of this club, I must beg leave to whisper in his ear a word or two, illustrative of its character. To *club wit*, and *club society*, of that period, and most particularly to the one under consideration, may be appropriately applied the thought of Montecuculi, as only three single points were necessary to effect the supposed existence of the former, and the real happiness of the latter, viz.—*first*, practical jokes; *second*, practical jokes; and *third*, practical jokes.

To those, therefore, to whom the ensuing sportive anecdotes may appear frivolous, it should be recalled, that whilst grave, sentimental writing is a simple, common-place effort, there is so much difficulty and danger in trying to be comic, so much fear of proving *foolish* in the endeavour to be *facetious*, that more than common indulgence should be granted; for, if the world be full of misery, he who for a moment can excite a laugh (let him be *biographer* or *buffoon*,) ought not to be

* Vide title-page to "Gammer Gurton's Needle," by the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

considered the despicable member of society, which the dull junto of *crying classical philosophers* would depict him ; so, here ends my apology, and now commences *club wit* and *club merriment*.

The Duke of Richmond was one of the best players in our drama, not as cricketer, but as companion. No man, ever better loved his friend, his joke, and his bottle ; jocularly offering as his excuse for the latter propensity, “That when a man had once had *too* much, he could never have *enough*.” *He*, and good humour being almost synonymous, his Grace was one of the very few, who was most *himself* when *not himself* ; I mean, that being another exemplification of the “*in vino veritas*” maxim, he displayed *even* more natural, affable, and entertaining qualities after dinner than before it.

Soon after my election into the club, I attended a grand county match, at Moulsey Hurst. Our head quarters being at Kingston, the Duke, who was of our party, asking me, the following morning, whether I would not rather ride to the cricket ground, offered the loan of one of his horses. I accepted the proposal, and starting together, we continued our route gaily, and cheerfully, without “peril, or adventure,” till we encountered a party of soldiers ; when to my utter alarm, and to the surprise of the red coats, the horse I rode began capering, curveting, and pirouetting so perfectly *à la Vestris*, that like another John Gilpin, I first lost my hat, then my balance, and then pitched on the ground ; but instead of alighting on my head, I unaccountably found myself on my feet, staring my dancing partner full in the face ; astounded, and wondering “what trick he would play next.”

I need not pause to describe the universal amusement ; nor the great gratification that his Grace manifested, during the performance of this whimsical “*pas de deux* ;” but I must stop to say a word in explanation. The Duke had lately purchased the horse of Astley, and the military rider who trained it, dressed in full uniform (purposely to excite attention,) at length produced so deep an impression on his pupil, that not only on the appearance of his tutor, but on that of any other *red coat*, the animal was regularly so struck with awe, and

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alarm, that notwithstanding, kicking, whipping, and spurring, he voted all material business should stand over ; and thought with *Chrononhotonthologos*,

“ First, let us have a dance.”

When this first “ practical joke ” was concluded, the Duke hoped that I was not offended—I replying, (as Holeman had on a former occasion) in the words of the *spilt* French dancing master, “ *tout au contraire*,” we resumed our ride, and it concluded without further prank from either Duke, or horse.

Lord Winchelsea was a good cricketer, a most liberal supporter of the game, and as is well known, a man of elegant, and accomplished manners ; but he was considerably too precise, and too punctilious, to descend to mix, in what the grave would term, the boyish buffooneries of our club. Lord Tha- net, and Lord Darnley also stood aloof, and watched the “ tug of war,” from the distance. Lord Cardigan would willingly have followed these examples, had the wags always been equally inclined to permit him ; but he, like myself and others, may remember their quips, and cranks, on various occasions.

Lord Frederick Beauclerc both in the club-room and the field, preserved “ the even tenour of his way ;” never *proposing* the aforesaid quips and cranks, though his companionable qualities seldom allowed him to *oppose* them. These exceptions being made, it may be guessed by a reference to a previous enumeration of the principal members of the club, of whom the majority of “ the *hoaxers* ” consisted.

In the field, Lord Frederick Beauclerc stood unrivalled ; indeed altogether, he may certainly, be considered as the first cricketer of his day. I say *altogether*, because, though no man could equal David Harris in bowling, or surpass Tom Walker in batting, or Hammond in wicket keeping, yet, Lord Frederick united in himself all these three great points of the game in so considerable a degree, that he may fairly be called the CRICHTON of cricket.

I never can forget the day, (nor either can he, I suspect,) when I played with him a single wicket match, for no incon-

siderable wager. During the ten innings he gave me, to his one, I succeeded in hitting away some of his "high, home, and easy" balls, and in getting a number of runs just sufficient to completely exhaust my strength, and make me feel, that, when he "went in," I might as well have endeavoured to bowl down the Monument, as Lord Frederick's wicket. Making the attempt however, after an hour's Sisyphean labour, and something like a fit, I abandoned the hopeless contest, and with it, flesh, money, and Olympic reputation.

Lord Thanet's brothers, John, and Henry Tufton, were to me both my right, and left hands, during each cricket *campaign*; for such it really was,—marching from May till September, from place to place,—encamping here, and bivouacking there, from day to day. But only from *day to day*; for, at night, like brave soldiers, gallantry proceeding to *close quarters*, we regularly took refuse from the "pearly dews," in that grand dépôt of stores, and provisions, an inn.

John Tufton, who under a grave, reserved manner, concealed an unbounded love and fund of humour, was one of the principal "convivial" in our club. Though, not a first rate cricketer, he was, what is called a *safe* one; would that I could add, he was also a *safe* driver.

He would frequently say to me, "I will give you a cast in my gig;" and he as regularly *kept his word*. One instance, from the many, will tend, perhaps, to prove the truth of this assertion. As we were "trotting along the road" from Canterbury to Ramsgate, believing that he was the *good whip* he had described himself, I fell into that state, into which those many valuable members of the House of Commons, who think argument superfluous, often fall. From my deep sleep I was suddenly awakened, by a sudden motion, and to my utter surprise, found myself recumbent on a sandy road, my companion comfortably yawning by my side, and a crowd of countrymen tittering around us.

It appeared on the deposition of these staring bantams, who had watched, and followed us from the adjacent village, that John Tufton having also got rid of *argument* by seconding *my motion*, and the horse partially following the example of both, more than half asleep, had pursued his lazy, wavering

way, until observing the fine tempting grass, that lined the adjoining bank, he, on the principle of the “devil take the *hindmost*,” directing his course thither, ascended leisurely, and we descended rapidly on the road below.

This gentleman’s brother, Henry Tufton, was one of the handsomest young men about town, and as *recherché* for his pleasantry, as admired for his gentlemanly bearing, and lofty spirit; both as cricketer, and companion, he always proved himself one of the greatest acquisitions in the club. With him too, I must be vain enough to play a single wicket match; which terminated very differently, and far more unpleasantly, than the previous one, with Lord Frederick; for, a ball from my bat, struck my friend with so much force on the left arm, that the bone was broken by it. A surgeon, of the name of Robinson, being on the ground, during the occurrence of the accident, immediately set it; and to show at once the firmness, and mildness of Harry Tufton’s disposition, his first wish, after the conclusion of the painful operation, was to see me. I obeyed, when, to my infinite relief, and gratification I found him in very good spirits, and he instantly observed, with a smile,

“Reynolds, Lord Frederick hitherto, has never *fractured* any thing but *wickets*—so, play him again.”

Sir Horace Mann, long called the *King of Cricket*, (as he was the principal maker of the different matches, and always kept open table for the whole club, at his seat near Maidstone, and at his house in Margate,) was, like Lord Winchelsea, one of the good, old, *courtly school*, and a personage of equal decorum, and punctilio. Yet, notwithstanding this hospitality, his excellent manners, and his universal popularity, he was too frequently made the object of the buffooneries of his less decorous associates.

One day, one of the wags having adroitly extracted with a borrowed pin, or needle, the delicate French *double entendre* mottos, from several *bonbons*, substituted such true English *single entendres*, as George the Second used to call our attempts in that branch of licensed indecency, that, when Sir Horace opened one, and began to read it to the lady next him, he stared, abruptly stopped, tore the motto, and calling his

butler, precipitately quitted the room. I cannot fix the precise extent of the involuntary information his fair guest received, for I was not near enough to hear him ; but, it was observed, that, during several succeeding minutes, she continued alternately to blush, titter, and fan herself.

One other instance of their usual adroitness at *practical jokes*, was exhibited the same year, at Dandelion; where, another worthy, wealthy member of our club, gave a public breakfast, *a la fourchette*, to the electors of * * * * *, which borough he had long represented ; at our instigation his grateful constituents, drinking his health with three times three, he arose to return them thanks ; when, preluding his intention with a glass of claret and a pinch of snuff by way of a preparatory refreshment, he sneezed *nine times nine*, to the confusion and astonishment of his edified constituents : Charles Anguish having previously seized on his snuff-box and dislodging its finely flavoured contents, had secretly substituted *hellebore*. But, every thing was given and received with such good humour (those vulgar words *huff* and *sulk* being unknown in the club,) that every man might have cut his joke, without the most remote chance of “losing his friend.”

Mrs. Siddons, and some other ladies, were present during a part of this gala ; entering into the spirit of the scene, this great actress on that day displayed more of the comic, than the tragic, muse, and seemed particularly amused with the humour of the chief of our *convivial* cricketers—indeed, so was every body with the same facetious personage, except Andrews, who, on being asked why he did not laugh at his jokes, replied—

“ My dear Sir, I can see no humour in a man who owes me three guineas.”

Richard Leigh, as a maker of matches, and a general promoter of cricket, as the observer of a hospitality almost feudal, at his seat at Wilmington ; as the supporter and superintendent of the private plays at the Royal Kentish Bowmen’s Lodge,* where Miss Mellon, now Mrs. Coutts, was the fa-

* In a new farce acted at this theatre, supposed to have been written by Mr. Maddocks, I recollect a pun, which, from its oddity, may be deemed worth repeating. A large party of soldiers surprising two resurrection men in a church-

vourite actress; and as the donor of the most splendid musical treats in which Harrison, Knyvett, Sale, Suett, Dignum, and others of almost equal celebrity conjoined their talents, at last induced us of the cricket club to pronounce, that though our worthy Baronet, Sir Horace, was justly called the king of the noble game, it must be confessed that our Kentish squire was the “*viceroy over him.*”

The decision of such competent judges in affairs of cricket, was equal to that, of the old *Marechale de Boufflers*, in affairs of *ton*; and so substantiated the validity of Leigh’s pretensions, that, at length, his greatest rival, the Duchess of Gordon, was compelled publicly to acknowledge, that

“ Though I am the first, you are the second *match-maker* in England, Mr. Leigh.”*

Of the Marquis of Hertford, I saw but little; but that little is quite enough to make me speak of him most cautiously and respectfully. Indeed, who would venture to speak otherwise of a gentleman, whom they had seen on a trifling wager with the Duke of Richmond, after hitting with a pistol shot, at a distance of twelve paces, the rim of a chalked circle, about the size of a small orange, offer to wave this successful fire, and take a second chance. His Grace, naturally acquiescing, the Marquis fired a second time, and the ball literally struck in the very centre of the orange!

The Duke yielded his bet with an expression of surprise, and every body, during the remainder of that day, even —, the famous duellist, treated the Marquis with particular civility.

I could expatiate for ever on my cricket reminiscences; the days they comprehended, are amongst the happiest of my life. Even now, as formerly (were it permitted me) I could dwell on the particular excellencies of Lord Frederick, David Harris, Tom Walker, Beldam, Robinson, Scott, Hammond, Wells, Small, and other first-rate players, with all the enthusiasm of a lover’s retrospection.

yard, the officer seized one of them, and asked him what he had to say for himself?

“ Say, Sir?” he replied, “ why, that we came here to raise a *corpse*, and not a *regiment*.”

* Of three daughters of this Lady, one married the Duke of Richmond, another the Duke of Bedford, and a third the Marquis of Cornwallis.

At a grand match at Stokedsford, near Alresford, elected as a substitute for a very indifferent player, suddenly taken ill, I, for the first and last time, played against the celebrated formidable, Harris. In taking my place at the wicket, I almost felt as if taking my ground in a duel with the afore-mentioned unerring Marquis; and my terrors were so much increased by the mock pity and sympathy of Hammond, Beldam, and others round the wicket, that when this mighty bowler, this *Jupiter tonans*, hurled his bolt at me, I shut my eyes in the intensity of my panic, and mechanically gave a random desperate blow, which, to my utter astonishment, was followed by a loud cry all over the ring of “*Run, run.*”

I did run; and with all my force; and getting *three* notches, the Duke of Richmond, John Tufton, Leigh, Anguish, and other arch wags, advanced, and formally presented to me twenty-five sixpences in a hat, collected from the by-standers, as “*The Reward of Merit.*” Even Lord Winchelsea, and Sir Horace Mann, contributed to this, and then all playfully commenced promoting a new subscription, which only *stopped*, because I could not *stop* the next ball. To my great joy, up went my stumps, and out I walked; certainly with some little *eclat*, being the first member of the club, who had been considered a *regular player*, i. e. *paid* for his services.

On my returning from this match, I was spectator of an unfortunate accident that occurred to my friend, Morton; who, proceeding in the evening in a gig to Winchester, was upset in a haw-haw, (which separates the Dean of Winchester’s park from the road,) owing to the desperate driving of a drunken clergyman in another gig, who in conjunction with his companion, a chorister of Winchester cathedral, was also upset. Poor Morton ruptured a blood-vessel in his thigh, and his reverend antagonist fractured three ribs; but his vocal chum was evidently more frightened than hurt. It is impossible to conceive a more ridiculous and laughable figure than this latter exhibited, when John Tufton and I, descending from our gig, raised him on his legs. He stared—coughed—cleared his throat—and then, trying every note in the gamut, he commenced chanting the whole of Handel’s grand chorus of “*Hailstones for Rain,*” and “*The Horse and its Rider,*” with

such vehemence of utterance and absurdity of expression, that until we were told his "*calling*," and perceived that he was endeavouring to determine the state of his most *vital* part, we conceived him either suffering through fear, a temporary derangement, or a confirmed lunatic.

A kind old lady passing at this time, offered Morton the loan of her chariot, which I accepted for him, and accompanied him in it to Winchester; where he became so much worse, that I was compelled to write to Wilson, and request his immediate attendance. He speedily arrived; but in spite of all his consummate skill and unremitting attention, several weeks elapsed before our poor invalid was pronounced convalescent.

Thus much for cricket, on which theme, as before stated, I could dwell for ever, did I not fear that some of my readers have already cried "Hold, enough." This, however, I hope I may add in extenuation of these latter anecdotes; that whatever *lightness* may be attached to them, they have attempted to preserve the characters and dispositions of those who, though they deserve the talents and exertions of a more able biographer, evidently deserve still to be remembered.

On October the 23d, 1794, my fourth comedy, called *The Rage*, was produced; and, as my friend, Boaden, remarks in his "*Life of Kemble*," "*The Rage* fortunately was supposed to be personal." *Sir Paul Perpetual* was by the *mis-judging million* voted to be the Duke of Queensbury; the *Honourable Mr. Savage* the Duke of Hamilton; *Flush*, Mr. King, the husband of Lady Lanesborough; *Signor Cignet*, the husband of Madame Mara; *Gingham*, a young, notorious member of parliament; and *Lady Sarah Savage*, Lady O——, or Lady W——, an important matter much disputed, but never, I am sorry to add, satisfactorily decided.

Now I can *positively* affirm with *Arbaces*, "I am innocent!"—(*Qui capet, ille fucit*,")—and though I acknowledge the comedy was written with the view of lashing the vulgarity of fashion, *generally*, it decidedly was never intended to be *personal*; if only, from the conviction, that in such case, it must have been suppressed by the licenser. However, the "*times were out of joint*," and the anti-aristocratical party, so twisted and perverted every generally satirical allusion (in

this production and all others,) to their own purposes, that my humble *dramatis personæ*, were deemed *living portraits*, and in spite of my long avowed loyalty, Merry and others asserted, that “I was a *democrat*, without knowing it.”

So unremitting in their exertions, were the propagators of this opinion, that even his late Majesty was infected by it; and when he entered the theatre, the night that he had commanded the comedy, he told Mr. Harris, that he feared he had come to see a play, he ought not to see;—no pleasant observation to the manager, and positively, alarming to the author, and Lord Salisbury, the Lord Chamberlain.

However, we were wholly relieved from all anxiety, when we observed the King laugh most heartily at the following reply of the *Honourable Mr. Savage*, to his sister, Lady Sarah:—

“My brother!—pooh, he’s a gentleman to be sure—proud—*independent*—and all in the grand style—but I!—I’m not like him,—I’m a man of fashion—I’m not a gentleman!”

His Majesty’s good taste, and sound theatrical judgment, enabling *him* to discriminate between *personal* and *general satire*, he not only continued to express his approbation during the performance, but on its conclusion, he told Mr. Harris, that he was altogether much gratified, by his evening’s entertainment.

Fearing that a *benefit*, at Covent Garden, might prove a *loss*, and that I was more likely to receive a *call*, for my jokes, than a *dividend*, (on account of the great attraction of the new theatre, in Drury Lane,) I proposed to Mr. Harris to make a new arrangement. To this, he willingly acceding, I was secured thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eight-pence, on each of the first nine nights, and one hundred pounds on the twentieth night. This, was the foundation of that bargain between manager, and author, which, I believe, exists to the present period. My whole profits on this piece amounted to five hundred pounds, and as it was acted forty nights, Mr. Harris had every reason to be satisfied with his bargain. I should add, that Boaden obliged me with a very effective prologue, and from that time to the present hour, our intimacy has continued so uninterruptedly, that I believe I may say, he is an-

other old friend, who can give me a tolerably *good character*.

I must not forget to mention here, a civility I received from a late leading critic of the day, for the sake of its characteristic result. A new comedy, written by one of my particular friends, was put into rehearsal. On the very evening, that it was to be produced, meeting this great journalist, as he was going out of town, and asking him to speak good-naturedly of my friend's play, he kindly told me, that I might myself write the theatrical criticism for the following morning's newspaper, but to be sure to confine my praise within rational bounds.

Speeding post haste, with this good news to my friend, the author, he quietly heard my communication, and then replied,

“Pooh!—*you* write the account of my piece? I shall write it myself!”

He was as good as his word; and sending his precious *morceau* to the printer, in my name, it was, according to the previous directions of the great critic and editor, inserted verbatim. The following morning, I was not a little astonished, when I read, “That the four first acts of the comedy of the previous evening, were not inferior in point of plot, incident, language, and character, to the greatest efforts of Beaumont and Fletcher, and other old dramatists;” and “that the *last act* might probably be considered one of the *finest* on the stage.”

Meeting the friendly editor, on his return to town, he exclaimed,

“You *pitched it too strong*, I shall never trust you again!”

During this winter, I again visited Topham, at Cowslip Hall, where I was not only cheered by his society, but by that of some of the most entertaining companions of the day.

Topham's house, unlike many country houses, was neither dull nor monotonous, for he constantly kept before us a moving prospect—in addition to successful literary employment, he was a most active magistrate, (both in Suffolk and Yorkshire,) a liberal lord of the manor, and an indefatigable promoter of agricultural improvements. Topham himself not being able to exist within the *atmosphere* of a bore, his good taste,

never allowed him to introduce such annoyance to his visitors. The present *anti-matter of fact* man, I found at Cowslip Hall, was Merry, and the various anecdotes, in the relation of which we gaily passed the long evenings of dark December, over a jovial bottle and a cheerful fire, made too deep an impression on my mind, to be effaced by the succeeding years. Topham was in himself, a “tower of strength,” but aided by Merry, the *Douglas*, and the *Hotspur* both combined, “old panting Time toiled after us in vain.”

In Italy, Merry became acquainted with a beautiful married woman, and shortly afterwards commenced that attachment for each other, which, for seven years, existed with unabated ardour. Her husband having contracted the manner of Italian spouses, and possessing his own little attachments, which monopolized all his time, the domestic arrangements of the “Home Department,” were, at length, entirely surrendered to Merry. Indeed, to such a pitch, had the foreign high breeding, and *nonchalance* of the master of the house arrived, that, on going out for the evening, he would frequently say to Merry,

“As you will probably see Madame, before I shall, be kind enough to say to her, that such, and such people, must be invited to-morrow.”

The efforts of the wife’s family having at length effected a separation between Merry and the lady, their parting was of a very distressing description, for they were tenderly attached to each other. The love sick climate of Italy, may perchance, add force to passion; for, there, love becomes, from want of other avocation, the serious business of life. All the Italian energies centre there; and the gay, and the grave, the young, and the old, talk of it as of the principal object of their existence.

This fascinating woman, in losing Merry, lost for ever, a man amiable, and elegant; and possessing a mind stored with talents, and acquirements, far surpassing the usual allotment. Merry, on his part, was separated from the being he had long, and sincerely loved, and the ease and splendour he had so long enjoyed; but, unfortunately, with a mind and disposition, not exactly formed to support quite philosophically, such a sudden and severe reverse.

At this period of his life, returning to England, and there living upon the remnants of his small property, he renewed his intimacy with Topham; with whom he had been brother officer in the Horse Guards, and fellow commoner at Cambridge. While he was yet in Italy, some lines had appeared, in the “World” newspaper, tributary to his genius, written, I believe, by Topham. This, however, by some *really* good-natured friend was sent to him abroad; and in reply, transmitting some poetry to England, Topham gave it the signature of DELLA CRUSCA, (a name afterwards so celebrated,) and inserted it in the “World.” That poetry soon found admirers. A writer, shortly afterwards, under the assumed appellation of ANNA MATILDA, addressing to him an ode, in the same paper. To this, Merry replying, a poetical correspondence ensued, which, from its fervour, had all the appearance of being the result of a real passion; but at the time, they were actually unknown to each other.

I never shall forget Merry’s ecstatic feelings, on the day he discovered where his adored Anna Matilda was to be seen. The place of appointment certainly proved some check to his felicity, for it was—Cateaton Street—however, he soon surmounted that difficulty, by terming it *Cateaton bowers*—but when the wished for moment came—when he stood in the presence of the ideal goddess of his idolatry, and saw a plain respectable matronly lady—simply poetical and platonic, he walked away in sad dudgeon, and endeavoured to conceal his disappointment, by concealing her name—in vain—for Anna Matilda was soon discovered to be no other than Mrs. Cowley.

A short time before this period, Merry had very earnestly sought to be appointed Poet Laureat. So strenuously did Topham, Andrews, and others exert themselves with their friends in power, that I have no doubt his application would have succeeded, had not Mr. Pye, who had been member for Berkshire, at that very period, fallen prostrate at the feet of the Muses. A county member soliciting the office of Poet Laureat, was a novel circumstance, and not altogether to be resisted; and, therefore, poor Merry, disappointed in this hope, as he had previously been in others, gradually and imperceptibly adopted the cause of democracy, when another moment of in-

decision in the breast of a Knight of the Shire, might have fated Della Crusca to praise loyalty and its appendages, during the remainder of his life.

At Cambridge, Merry, amongst other fellow commoners, became acquainted with a young man of high family, and afterwards, a leading member of several fashionable clubs in London. With a handsome person, insinuating manner, and effeminate voice, he was the very god of riot, and never seemed happy but in frolic and confusion.—One evening, on being suddenly interrupted by his tutor, whilst he was carousing with some fellow collegians, finding that either his friends or the enemy must quit the room, with his usual mild tone, he warned the tutor to depart; who indignantly refusing, the facetious pupil, coolly and unclassically grasping the “*Magister*” by his nether garment with one hand, and his collar with the other, carried him to the window, and gently dropped him into the river Cam, where, by the assistance of those on the banks, he escaped at the expense of a good ducking.

Another singular character on leaving Cambridge, entered into the army, and was appointed a captain, I believe, in a light infantry company. Merry once saw this odd conspicuous hero, in his uniform. To the short jacket of his regiment, he added a scymetar of such immense size, that he was compelled to employ a small carriage to support it. This little vehicle which moved on four wheels was attached to himself by a chain; and whoever ventured to laugh at this whimsical mode of conveyance, he obliged with a challenge. Thus exemplifying the old ballad,

“ And as he went all on his way
A wondrous sight was he:
And eke he turn’d, as who should say,
Do you, Sir, look at me?”

Topham was born in the year 1751. His father, who was descended from an ancient and honourable family in Yorkshire, was bred to the profession of the law, and during the course of his practice in York, rose to many of its most lucrative, and honourable distinctions. He died at the age of fifty-eight; having realized a most splendid fortune.

Had his father lived two years longer, my friend Topham

would have succeeded to some of his lucrative employments ; for the promise of one of them had already been given. This promise was afterwards broken, and in the breach of it the literary public are, perhaps, more interested than they have been hitherto aware ; as it introduced, for the first time, to public notice, the celebrated *LAURENCE STERNE*.

The consequence of this breach of promise, was a misunderstanding between Mr. Topham, senior, and the Dean of York, when *Laurence Sterne* was only a poor curate of the Chapter of that city. One angry word leading to another, as often happens in the *Chapter of Accidents*, as well as in the *Chapter of Divinity*, they, at last proceeded to a printed warfare ; when, the Dean not feeling himself wholly capable of supporting a literary controversy, was compelled to seek a defender. *Laurence Sterne* was the fortunate man, selected by his superior for the execution of this important undertaking ; and he accordingly produced the first lay effort of his pen, a pamphlet called *The Watchcoat*, in defence of his employer, and in attainture of the measures, and proceedings, of the head of the Topham family. *The Watchcoat* evidently had reference to the name of the contested office, for (if I recollect rightly) the author of this party production, states, rather more coarsely than wittily, that “the owner wanted to cut out the said watchcoat into an under petticoat for his wife, and a pair of breeches for his son.” The reply to this, was most spirited, and in better taste, but this controversial correspondence, like many others, died a natural death. However, through life it was a feather in my friend Topham’s cap, that when a boy he was the unconscious founder of *STERNE*’s literary career ; nor while he was reprimanded for his Greek, or rewarded for his Latin, did one single pang tell him, that he was, at that very moment, the object of the sarcasms of the future author of *TRISTRAM SHANDY* ;—though, if we are to believe the remark of some Italian author, far above the pleasure of being praised by a *little* man, is that, of being abused by a *great* one.

Speaking of the late Lord Littleton, and of the singular dream which preceded his death, Topham related to us the whole story ; but which, with its supernatural bird, white

lady, awful prophecy, and fatal completion, has since been so frequently, and so variously detailed, that I cannot muster sufficient assurance to introduce it here ;* therefore, will pass to an event, that is also connected with this strange death of Lord Lyttleton, and which, though nearly equally extraordinary, has, I believe, never been published. Of this event, Topham could speak with considerable certainty, as he was an eye-witness to the occurrence of the principal circumstances ; and which circumstances, I afterwards heard (more than once) confirmed by the party himself.

Andrews, imagining that Lord Lyttleton was in Ireland, with Lord Fortescue, and Captain O'Byrne, and wholly unconscious of the fatal prophecy, on the day proceeding his Lordship's death, proceeded, with his partner Mr. Pigou, to their residence, adjacent to their gunpowder mills, in the vicinity of Dartford. On the following evening, being indisposed, he retired to bed at eleven o'clock ; his door was bolted, and he had a wax taper burning on the hearth. Whether he was asleep, or no, he never could decide ; but, he either saw, or thought he saw, the figure of his friend Lord Lyttleton approach his bed-side, wrapped in his long damask, morning gown, and heard him exclaim,

“ Andrews, it is all over with me.”

So deeply was Andrews convinced of the reality of this appearance, that imagining that Lord Lyttleton had arrived at Dartford, without his knowledge, and had walked into his room for the purpose of alarming him, (a practice his Lordship was very fond of following,) he expostulated with the figure on the absurdity of the joke, and rising in his bed, was much surprised to observe, that it had disappeared. Leaping on the floor, he commenced an immediate search : behind the curtains, under the bed, and around every part of the room, but no Lord Lyttleton was to be found. Then proceeding to the chamber-door, he perceived that it was bolted, as he had left it ; but, still unconvinced, he rang his bell, and sternly

* His Lordship's medical attendants accounted for this apparently supernatural event, in a very rational manner. Finding himself suddenly in solitude, a state which, during the few years previous to his death, he had always much disliked, a nervous spasm seized him, and stopped his breath for ever.

desiring to be told the truth, inquired of Harris, his valet, whether Lord Lyttleton had not just arrived. Though the servant, (who had just retired to his bed-room,) frequently replied in the negative, yet Andrews persisted that he had seen his friend. However, after another vain search, and a repeated request from Andrews, that his Lordship would not be so foolish as longer to conceal himself compelled at length, to abandon his unsuccessful attempts, he again retired to bed, though not to rest; for exactly as the hand of the clock, on the mantle-piece, pointed to twelve, he saw the figure of his friend again, but with a countenance so altered, so pallid, so ghastly, that Andrews' alarm increasing, he rang the bell, and called up the whole family, who with great difficulty, at last composed him, and convinced him of his error.

In the morning at breakfast, Andrews, in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Pigou, Topham, and various persons, recapitulated all the particulars of this extraordinary occurrence, and in his own mind, evidently believed he had still seen Lord Lyttleton.

When Andrews returned to town on the following Tuesday, he found at his house in Gower-street, a letter from Lord Westcote, and another from Captain O'Byrne,* informing him that Lord Lyttleton had died on the previous Saturday, at midnight; the *very night*, and the *very hour*, when he thought he had seen the ghastly figure of his friend.

"To others," concluded Topham, "I leave the task of commenting on, or elucidating this singular transaction. I can only add, that as you know, few men talk more, and generally, more pleasantly, than Andrews; but, for the space of two or three months after Lord Lyttleton's death, he would continue to sit during successive hours, motionless, and absorbed in silence; in fact, never speaking a word, but what related to the foregoing mysterious event.

Topham, thus declining giving a decision, I must now add a

* This pleasant Irish gentleman having advocated the cause of Lord Lyttleton on the night his Lordship had the memorable quarrel with the Reverend Henry Bate Dudley, at Vauxhall Gardens, (relative to Mrs. Hartley, the celebrated actress,) was soon afterwards appointed, through Lord Lyttleton's patronage to a company in a regiment of foot.

few words, though I own I do not profess that they are quite new. From the first Lord Lyttleton, to his son, the one just mentioned, and to the daughter, Lady Valentia, one distinguished characteristic seemed to pervade the whole family ; viz. a strange belief in supernatural appearances. The first Lord Lyttleton often asserted, that his first wife, his departed Lucy, whom he has immortalized by his verse, had more than once appeared to him. His son, as has been described, died a victim to the imaginary visitation of a spirit ; and his attached sister Lady Valentia, is said to have maintained that her fond, affectionate mother, after her death, had often stood before her bed, and smiled upon her.

To Andrews' opinions and belief, Topham used to oppose the confutation of Doctor Johnson, who observes,

“ That the fortuitous concurrence of circumstances alone, surprises us ; otherwise we should not think of them. We dream of a thousand things, which never happen, and we take no notice of the failure of their predictions. If once, however, events concur with a dream, one thinks, and talks of it.”

CHAPTER. XV.

NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

"Charles the Second, once observed of a certain country gentleman, that he thought he had wit enough to produce a book of good sayings. 'Provided,' cried Rochester, who stood at his Majesty's elbow, 'provided that he inserts very few of his own.'"

The great success of Mrs. Radcliffe's "Romance of the Forest," induced my friend Boaden, to undertake the difficult task of dramatizing it. Conceiving, that supernatural agency might again be rendered most effective in theatrical exhibition, Boaden boldly ventured to enlist into his service, that dangerous auxiliary, which, hitherto, had alone prospered under the tactics of Shakspeare; and, in a tragedy, once more found for "airy nothings, a local habitation, and a name." That he was successful in his attempt, all who remember the representation of *Fontainville Forest*, must willingly allow.

The great rage for horrors, at this period, and the success of Boaden's tragedy, suggested to Andrews, the idea of founding a piece, on another of the above-mentioned lady's celebrated romances, "The Mysteries of Udolpho." In this plan, I, as in *Better Late than Never*, was conjoined; and on the novel, we proceeded (as we thought,) till just before the conclusion; when, Andrews, and I, one day, suddenly discovered, that nothing remained of Mrs. Radcliffe, or her hero, but a portion of the name. The piece was christened the *Mysteries of the Castle*.

As before, Andrews was to have the whole fame; and I, half the profits. This *melange* was performed at Covent Garden Theatre in the beginning of January, 1795, and was rather favourably received.

During the first night's representation, towards the close of the third act, the audience expressed considerable disapprobation at a passage, which they conceived to be political—it alluded to "the government's secret enemies." I, recollecting

that there was a similar passage in the following scene, and that even the very words “secret enemies” were then repeated, rushed from the box where I was sitting into the green-room, and earnestly requested the actors to omit the objectionable sentence. They readily complying, the scene met with no interruption, and the play concluded without further expressions of dissatisfaction.

When we were all assembled behind the scenes, Mr. Harris, (conceiving with Lewis and every other person) that Andrews was the sole author pointed me out to my friend, and said—

“Andrews, thank Reynolds most particularly; for instead of resembling other authors, and envying your success, he could not have laboured more to effect it, nor have manifested a greater anxiety, had the play literally been his own.”

Beaumont, without speaking, glanced at *Fletcher* a look, that expelled him from the room, with all the haste and unpleasant sensations which a man feels, when conscious of receiving *unmerited* approbation.

The play was acted about eighteen times, but it was magnetized at the wrong end; or, in other words, its attraction being more *negative* than *positive*, on the termination of its sickly career, my account stood thus:—

	£	s.	d.
Profit by benefits	- - -	180	15 0
Loss by fame	- - -	0	0 0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	180	15	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

I must not forget to add, that one night during the performance of this piece, expressing my surprise at the uncommon thinness of the house to Morton, I added—

“I suppose it is owing to the war.”

“No,” he replied, “it is owing to the *piece*.”

During this month, I dined for the first time at the private anniversary dinner given by the committee of the Theatrical Fund of Covent Garden, an institution that must for ever per-

petuate the philanthropy and perseverance of its venerable founder, MR. HULL.* Would that he had lived to behold this child of his creation in its present matured state; a state so flourishing, and still so rapidly improving, that in all probability, within a score of years, the retired actor, like the retired officer, will receive half pay for his services.

Comparisons, no doubt, are odious; but, whilst all must sincerely rejoice at the improving state of both the theatrical, the musical, and other funds, surely it may be regretted, without the imputation of partiality, that the liberal part of the public do not imitate the charitable example of His Majesty, and subscribe more largely to the support of the LITERARY FUND; an institution which, in former days, might have saved an Otway or a Savage, and at the present moment, if better supported, might (though I rejoice to hear that it is annually increasing in prosperity,) still better support many a distressed man of talent.

What profession can be considered so laborious, and at the same time *so precarious*, as an author's? If he attempt to compensate for the smallness of his profits, by the greatness of his exertions, he only plays a losing game, for—

“ The brain too finely wrought
“ Preys on itself, and is destroyed by thought.”

Literature, therefore, is probably the only profession in which industry beyond a certain point, will not avail its employer.

When it is considered, that without plays, and other literary compositions, neither actors, critics, nor booksellers could exist, they, I am sure, ought to advocate the cause of the poor author, and protect and encourage an institution so intimately connected with their own interest. Many wealthy publishers I know already contribute to its support; unlike those close bargainers of the olden time, who, as Merry swore, “drank their champaigne out of authors' skulls.”

At the anniversary of the Theatrical Fund, I passed a most agreeable day. The singing of Johnstone and Incledon, the

* A fund on a similar plan was the following year established at Drury Lane, for the benefit of which Mr. Garrick annually performed.

vivacious anecdotes related by Lewis and Quick, and the strong interest excited by the presence of the venerable founder, Mr. Hull, rendered the whole scene peculiarly amusing and gratifying.

But the principal comedian on the occasion, (though perfectly unconscious of the fact,) was one of the visitors, an elderly gentleman, to whom every body present bore great good will; not only on account of his private worth, and urbane manners, but, for the rich entertainment he afforded to them all by the extreme ingenuousness and simplicity he so humorously manifested, in allowing himself to be persuaded into a *tenfold* repetition of the same story.

The mode by which these theatrical *hoaxers* (on this day) effected their purpose, was most ingenious. At the end of narrative the first, they all roared and *encored* it; then, when the repetition was terminated, some member would affect not to understand the leading circumstance, and therefore humbly begged to hear it again. This request being immediately granted by this gentleman of the true old school, the story was repeated for the *third* time with particular precision; but, at the close, the member with the *affectedly* defective understanding would continue to stare with much stupidity, and at last impatiently confess, that he could not comprehend the joke.

Then, Lewis and other wags would privately inform our amusing visitor that he had marred his effects the last time by not pressing a material point; on which, dwelling on every word with a clearness and slowness of utterance, as if he had intended to make each word a resting place for life, he proceeded to gratify their love of fun, and laugh for the *fourth* time.

But still the dull, *defective* member being unable to take the joke, he was called a thick, *potato-headed* Irishman; when, manifesting much indignation at this formidable epithet, a violent discussion ensued relative to the story's *real* meaning, when evident signs of a violent contest rapidly arising, in the hope of restoring peace, the kind, well-meaning, old gentleman would advance and again repeat his enigmatical tale.

During the three years that I attended this anniversary, the

above-mentioned circumstance regularly proved the grand star of the evening's amusement. On one of these occasions, after another angry altercation relative to the "real meaning" of the story, Munden, and Simmons, fought on the table, with such admirable assumption of the appearance of reality, that when, with the aid of a little paint, the latter, seemingly covered with blood and bruises, and more than half in the arms of death, was laid prostrate among the plates and decanters, the afflicted innocent cause of the whole confusion, once more deceived, was induced to approach Simmons, and impressively whisper into his ear, the miraculous story, as the only resuscitating remedy.

Another time, when there appeared to be not the smallest hope of an additional repetition, the master of the coffee-house entering, informed us, that the Persian Ambassador was below, and desirous to see one of the choicest specimens of English theatrical society, he would condescend to honour us with his presence. This request, receiving the unanimous consent of the room, the Ambassador, in full costume, was immediately introduced, followed by his secretary, and interpreter; and though the old gentleman had sat opposite to his *Excellency*, (Liston) during the whole of dinner, he never recognised him in his disguise, but was among the foremost in expressing the gratification he received from the honour of his presence.

We all remained standing and bowing; the hero of the day, mixing sherbet, calling for segars, and proving he well understood the etiquette of eastern courts. His *Excellency* noticing his attention in a marked manner, all was very satisfactory—but, when the *grand desired* moment arrived!—when the interpreter signified that it was his *Excellency's* pleasure to be gratified by hearing the *far-famed humorous story*; what person that was present can forget the glee, the ecstasy, with which our accommodating visiter fired off his *tenth evening gun*? The roar was tremendous, and the Ambassador and train left the room apparently breathless, with delight. Lewis proposed our comic hero's health, with three times three; and during the clamour, *his disrobed Excellency* returned, and imperceptibly taking his seat, the scene concluded with all of

us congratulating the delighted visiter on his having rendered the story thus effective; "and to a person so particularly inglorious of our language," added Liston.

"Ay, Mr. Liston"—was the reply,—“and to a person so particularly *ugly!*”

As a proof of the paramount power of actors in the art of hoaxing, allow me to add, that this amiable old gentlemen on general topics of conversation, always displayed great good sense; certainly his extreme good nature, and willingness to oblige, might have aided the manœuvres of his persevering assailants, but I doubt whether, even the oldest most and experienced member of the cricket club, could singly have stood against such a skilful combination of waggery.

I forgot to state, that long before this period, (“Better late than never,”) I again dined at the Old Beef-steak Club, where I was invited by my friend Serjeant Bolton, the *Recorder of the Club*, who had then lately fought his duel with Lord Lonsdale, in which he had not only been nearly shot by his antagonist, (the ball grazing his ear,) but the worthy Serjeant had nearly shot himself, having very gallantly received his Lordship’s fire, he was proceeding to return it, when his pistol accidentally going off, as he raised it to take aim, the ball carried off the top of his pointed shoe, just touching the foot; a circumstance, which he used to describe with much humour, adding,

“I see I am no Serjeant *at Arms.*”

Amongst others, I met this day, at the club, was that celebrated private singer, Captain Morris; and also the excellent public one, and mimic, Charles Bannister, whose imitation of Foote was said to be identity. Wilkes was also present, after a long absence, for which he was fined, and the *Recorder* pronounced sentence, in the following playful manner:—

“JOHN WILKES:—the inquiries we made after you were various, but fruitless.—A Scotchman said that you were at church; but your worst enemy could never believe *that* of you, so we attached no credit to the *North Briton.* Others said, that you had been seen walking with a *very* young lady, but for my part, I never could suppose you guilty of such an *Essay on*

Woman. However, as you have no sufficient cause to assign for your absence, the sentence of this court is, that you pay a fine of a dozen bottles of wine; though so great is my partiality for you, I am almost induced to wish, that the dozen was increased to *forty-five*."

Early in the month of September, was produced my fifth comedy, called *Speculation*. The two principal characters, *Tanjore*, and *Alderman Arable*, were admirably performed by Lewis, and Quick. The latter was a gentleman farmer, and because his barn, granary, piggery, and pigeon-house, were fancifully painted, highly varnished, and in every respect fantastically decorated, the democratic frequenters of the theatre, pronounced the original of this scene to be Frogmore, and *Alderman Arable*, a satire on no less a personage than the King.

As in the case of the preceding comedy, *The Rage*, on the night his Majesty commanded *Speculation*, the alarm of the manager and the author was again intense. On the appearance of the supposed Frogmore, every eye in the theatre was directed towards his Majesty, and that his eyes were directed towards the scene with particular attention was rendered awfully conspicuous by the remarked manner in which he leaned over the box, making repeated use of his opera glass, and frequently turning towards his family, as if to make remarks.

"I see," said Mr. Harris, in considerable agitation, "I see that the King is offended."

As for me, at these words, the terror I suffered was so considerably increased, that I began to be convinced, what I had apprehended *The Rage* would have procured for me, this unfortunate scene inevitably would, and I saw only in perspective an impeachment for high treason—Tower—axe—scaffold (and in reality) *headless* author.

In this state of mind did we continue, while the business of the stage, proceeded to that part of the scene, where Quick, as *Alderman Arable*, says,

"That pretty team now carries all the ashes, and other manure to a neighbouring farmer; for you must know, that I am much too cleanly to have my dust, and dirt thrown on my own land."

His Majesty threw himself back in the box, with a most violent burst of laughter, exclaiming,

“I—I—I?—Frogmore! good!—and like it—like it!”

Once again our triumph was complete ; from this moment, his Majesty continued to point out the application, to the Queen, and Princesses, and they partaking in his delight, to the end of the play, Quick in the supposed royal Frogmore farmer, became their principal amusement. Henceforward, the only persons in the Theatre, not gratified by this change of affairs, was the anti-jovial democratic party.*

Speculation was performed thirty-five nights, and produced me five hundred pounds.

Topham having left Cowslip Hall, took a seat, called Thaydon Hall, near Abridge in Essex, where, for the first time, I saw his three children, Juliet, Harriet, and Maria. The eldest, a lady, as elegant, and accomplished in her manners, as handsome in her person, is now married to the Reverend T. F. Forde Bowes, a gentleman of high family and of every considerable acquirements : Harriet died young ; and Maria married an officer in Yorkshire, and, I believe, now resides in France. But, from infancy to womanhood, Mrs. Bowes was my favourite ; to her father's good breeding, and good taste, she conjoins his agreeable conversational talents, and many other of his valuable acquisitions. Though the praise of a gentleman *hors de combat* will afford her little gratification, I could not pass over in silence, the name of a lady I have so long known, and so much esteemed.

I must mention, that, at this place, I proclaimed myself a complete *cockney sportsman*, at three different periods ; first, when I shattered into atoms a woodcock, which Topham

* A few weeks before his Majesty commanded this play, he had attended the House of Lords, and opened the Parliament. The state coach going, and returning, was violently assailed by the Jacobinical demons, and the sovereign, and all who accompanied him, were placed in imminent danger. Lord ——, who in his high official capacity, sometimes accompanied his Majesty on these occasions, was seated in the royal carriage. Shortly afterwards, irritated by the innumerable interrogatives, relative to his Majesty's safety, he petulantly replied.

“It is all very fine, talking about the King, the King! *Nobody thinks of Lord ——!*”

having previously killed, was running to pick up ; secondly, when I suffered a hare to escape, because I mistook it, for a terrier ; and, thirdly, when placed in the choicest part of the preserve, I nearly shot myself in taking aim, at the game, as they ran between my legs.

After many more failures, and personal expositions, equally grotesque, and absurd, the happy day at last arrived, when, to the astonishment of the spectators, and to the horror of the Lord of the Manor, I winged a pheasant. As it fell to the ground, triumphant, and exulting, I advanced to seize it ; when to my utter surprise, and confusion, it began to run so rapidly, that I, and an old dog, called "DOCTOR," after a fatiguing chace of above a quarter of a mile,—during which, we were cheered, and tallyhoed by the whole sporting assembly,—the bird completely distaneed both the *Doctor*, and the *Cockney*.

However, as I have so often played the clown in this my pantomimic life, from further feats of this description, I will for the present desist. *Decies repetita non placebit.*

On my return to town, I was elected into the Lion Club, which had existed nearly a century, though it consisted of (the ominous number) *thirteen* members. In the room, where we dined, was a *fac-simile* of the original Lion's Head at Button's Club, and the names of the *Lions* were,

Sir Thomas Plomer (late Master of the Rolls,) Serjeant Sellon, Messrs. Const, Topham, Andrews, Merry, Kynaston, nephew of the great actor of that name,) Deburg, Pierson, and four other very ancient members, probably contemporaries of Betterton, and Booth. One of these latter was a physician, whose name, I have forgotten, though I ought to remember it, because one day after dinner, Topham, half waking from one of his facetious dreams, exclaimed,

"Whoever says Doctor —— was a country midwife, mistakes! He was a farrier!" than with a loud snore, he again sank into sleep.

Another of these patriarchal persons being exceedingly deaf, *perceiving* a loud roar of laughter, desired, the person next him, to *roar* the joke into his ear, through his trumpet.

This operation having been performed, the queer old gentleman solemnly shook his head, muttering,

“Oh fie! for shame!”

Then being very near sighted, and mistaking me for Const, he whispered to me across the table,

“Mr. Const, it is all very well, when that Reynolds cuts at Andrews, and the lawyers, he! he! he! but when he broadly alludes to ——, Oh Mr. Const! I wish like me, you could turn a deaf ear to him.”

I feel, I have forgotten my promise ; the Crown again!—I cannot, I see, alter my nature ; and if therefore the reader has been kind enough to bear with me so far, I fear, that I must request him to continue to accept me in my present character, or to reject me altogether. I am no actor of all work :—I am simply writing my own *light* history, in my own *light* manner ; and even if I attempted to be the dull repeater of abstruse, and common-place speculations, or the sentimental hero, of an exaggerated, romantic narrative, I suspect that the majority of my readers would imitate the example of the Newcastle audience; who, when Stephen Kemble was performing *Hamlet*, previously to the representation of a pantomime, constantly interrupted him, exclaiming “*Tarlequin, tarlequin! Punch, punch!*”

But, to return to the *Lions*. A club of good fellows, where there should be “a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together,” would be a most desirable institution ; but, as in all large families there is *one*, so in mixed societies there are usually *two*, or more *rotten sheep*. I do not allude solely to the reprobate, the duellist, or the blacklegs ; no, for I have known men of the soundest principles, and strong natural talents, simply from the want of *suave*, pleasing manners, prove themselves infinitely more troublesome, to the remainder of the flock, than the whole of the before mentioned *trio* combined. If sharpers have introduced themselves, into the fashionable world, and have there, been received, and admired, solely through the influence of *manner* ; if even politicians have made the very violence of politics appear gentle, and captivating, by their personal address, how must all the ac-

tions of the virtuous portion of mankind be improved, and adorned by good manners. Much indeed is it to be regretted, that *VIRTUE*, too often deeming her own conscious rectitude a sufficient attraction, lounges forth in a loose slovenly garb, forgetting how greatly austere habits, and severity of mien, deduct from her captivations, and disgust her beholders ; particularly, when placed in comparison with *VICE*, her specious adversary, who almost invariably clothes herself in those seductive, and important charms,—polished manners, prepossessing appearance, that unwillingness to take offence, and that willingness to pardon it, when given, which delight mankind, more perhaps than any other qualities on earth.

As a conclusion to these remarks, I will add the confirmation of *La Bruyère* :—

“*Avec de la vertu, de la capacité, et une bonne conduite, l'on peut être insupportable ; les manières, qu'on néglige comme de petites choses, sont souvent ce qui fait que les hommes décident de vous en bien, ou en mal.*”

Topham always possessed, in the most eminent degree, these essential ingredients in the composition of a gentleman and man of the world, and Merry never lost them till he became a confirmed democrat.

It was this year, 1795, that my intimacy commenced with Mr. Godwin, the author of *Political Justice*, and that deservedly popular novel, *Caleb Williams*. To convey an idea of the extent of the popularity of this latter publication, I need but add, that Godwin, having one day paid a visit to Mrs. Inchbald, left the room shortly after Henry Siddons, then a boy about thirteen or fourteen years old, had entered it; when, Mrs. Inchbald, asking the latter if he knew the name of the gentleman who had just withdrawn, and he answering in the negative, Mrs. Inchbald informed him that he was the author of *Caleb Williams*, when, to her utter astonishment, the boy, with true genuine enthusiasm, falling suddenly on his knees, reverently kissed the chair which the philosopher had just quitted, rapturously thanking heaven that he might now say, he had been in company with the author of the best novel in the English, or any other language.

About this period (for I cannot state the exact time) I also

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met, O'Keefe, (author of those popular and entertaining comedies of *Wild Oats* and the *Young Quaker*, and of some of the best farces in the English drama,) at a dinner given by Captain Barlow, where was present the late Mr. Perry, proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*. Porson the great Grecian, was one of the party ; and before the cloth was removed, our host happening to assert that the ancients never drank spirits, to prove the contrary, the retentive professor repeated, *sans ceremonie*, above two hundred Greek lines.

O'Keefe, who had then for some time suffered under the dreadful infirmity of blindness, during the course of this tedious quotation, more than once asked me very earnestly and impatiently, what sort of a man this learned speaker was ?

“ Did he wear a wig or spectacles ?—Did he look like a school-master, or had he the head of a college doctor ? ”

Before, however, I could give him the desired information, some other person at the table carelessly and accidentally quoting from the fourth act of the *Belle's Stratagem*, Porson asserted that he was wrong. Argument, that *pest of society*, (for whoever convinced another, or was ever himself convinced) ensued ; the result was, that, in order to prove his antagonist had *misquoted*, Porson commenced the fourth act of Mrs. Cowley's comedy, and was proceeding through the whole of it *verbatim et literatim*, when his opponent, wisely and adroitly, to the relief of the whole room, *gave in*, and I conclude, from that day, bowed down to Porson's superior memory.

This further retentive display so completely excited our amiable and original dramatist's curiosity, that he again asked me to describe to him this classical phenomenon ; in the hope, I presume, of being enabled to dramatize him as another *Lingo*.

Porson, considered with regard to his learning and memory, was certainly an astonishing man ; and, no doubt, to make accurately such *very* long quotations was extremely difficult ; many though, I fear, would have said with Johnson—

“ Would it were impossible ! ”

Among other new acquaintances at this time, I may include Mrs. Inchbald, then a most handsome and entertaining woman. The impediment in her speech was of that peculiar nature, that it rather imparted an entertaining characteristic to her conversation, than diminished its force. The following are two of the numerous theatrical anecdotes she used to relate. A tragic actor of Covent Garden Theatre, requesting her to negotiate with Mr. Harris for a renewal of his engagement, at the same time required a high increase of salary. To this application, Mr. Harris referred the actor to the following laconic epitaph:—

“ Lie still if you’re wise,
“ You’ll go *down* if you *rise*.”

The other anecdote, (an *odd* one) related principally to herself; and though, I believe, well known behind the scenes, I do not think that it has ever before been published. One morning waiting on a manager, who shall be nameless, with a new play, the gentleman *suddenly* became so violently enamoured, that, dispensing with all preparatory courtesies, he commenced a personal attack, *sans ceremonie*; on which, the lady seizing him by his tail with one hand, with the other rang the bell, till assistance appeared. Ever afterwards, when speaking of this love *rencontre*, she used whimsically to stammer out,

“ How f—ortunate for me he did NOT w—EAR a w—ie.”

To which apparently just remark, a certain *punning* brother dramatist one day replied, “ I beg your pardon, Mrs. Inchbald; had your aggressor *worn a wig*, you would have been wholly saved from this amorous *rencontre*, because—

“ Love light as air, at sight of human *TYES*,
“ Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.””

I cannot conclude these anecdotes better than by adding, that no woman ever entered the walls of a theatre with more fair,

* Dining sometime afterwards with the above inveterate punster, one of the party, (amongst other *slipslops*) saying instead of *Pasticcios*, he liked *Pintackios*, the humorist cried out—

“ Reynolds, there are *nuts* for you.”

honourable pride than Mrs. Inchbald, nor ever quitted it with more admiration and esteem.

Another new acquaintance induces me to recur to legal topics, and to commence with a story, which though *old* to me, may probably be perfectly *new* to others. A laborious special pleader, being constantly interrupted by the mewing of his favourite cat, at length, (resolving to get rid of it) told his clerk to take and place the disturber where it might remain in safety, but still where it could never get out. The clerk instantly walked off with poor puss in the lawyer's bag, and on returning, being asked by his master whether the noisy animal had been so disposed of that it could not come back, the *cat carrier* dryly answered—

“Certainly, I have put him where he cannot get out—in the *Court of Chancery*.”

Having given this jocular instance of *delay*, I am now happy in the opportunity of relating one of *activity*, and in the case of my new acquaintance:—In a matter of vital importance to himself and his family, he gained (almost *instanter*) an injunction, and thereby, in a few terms, a decided judgment in his favour; and this very gentleman, a year afterwards, witnessed another specimen of legal despatch in equity. His niece, a *rich ward in chancery*, having been carried off to Scotland, the court, (on the application of her relatives,) became a court of *chivalry*; attachments were issued, and the adventurous knight errant was *immediately* seized, and brought to the court's castle—the *Fleet*.

Still it is evident the *march* cannot always be thus rapid. In protecting trustees and minors, investigating long accounts, in directing sales, and compelling the necessary parties to join in the conveyance; and (above all) in sifting and exposing all hidden sinister transactions, business must frequently move *slowly*; but, it should be remembered, that it generally moves *surely*; and though in the commencement of a cause the suitors only see before them “*mountain upon mountain*,” yet, having passed them, and ultimately arrived in a scene of security and repose, if they are so unreasonable as to be dissatisfied, they *ought* only to grumble at having travelled at an expense of *rather more than one shilling and six-pence* per mile.

When the various and arduous duties of the Lord Chancellor are considered, may we not wonder there is even so much “report of progress!” Let it be recollected, he is Keeper of the Great Seal—Speaker of the House of Lords—Member of the Cabinet—Hearer of Appeals—Arbiter in all cases of bankrupts and lunatics—Guardian of numerous wards—Appointer of the high law offices—Disposer of valuable church preferments—a Lord of trade and plantations—High Steward of Oxford, &c. &c. and yet an *individual* is expected *rapidly* to fulfil this Herculean labour!—At least, Lord Eldon, who, for upwards of twenty years, has decided so legally and equitably, and proved the *Atlas* of the court, has been accused of being doubtful and dilatory. With the immense increase of population, naturally has followed a great increase of law; and, therefore, the splenetic advocates for “*Terminer sans Oyer*,” might as well blame Dr. Jenner, of adding (by vaccination) to the number of plaintiffs and defendants, as censure a Chancellor, who has now to undergo three-fold the fatigue of his predecessors.

During this summer, I met at my friend Frederick Bourne’s, in the Adelphi, Sir Sidney Smith, Captain Wright, and Monsieur de Phelippeau, owing to whose intrepidity and generosity, the former gentleman had escaped from a French prison; they talked over the dangers they had run, and much interested us; particularly with that part of the story, where the keeper of the prison was satisfied, on Sir Sydney’s pledging himself to follow the officer, (M. Phelippeau in disguise) *wherever* he might choose to conduct him; and also, afterwards, when in the confusion of the moment, the gallant Frenchman had nearly discovered them, by giving the driver of the fiacre, a *double Louis*.

Monsieur Phelippeau was apparently a mild retiring character, and evidently shrunk, unaffectedly, from the praises his grateful friend so liberally and justly bestowed upon him.

Captain Wright appeared to me of that class of frank, hearty sailors, who are as pleasant to their friends on shore, as disagreeable to their enemies at sea. As for Sir Sydney, among his many valuable acquirements, he had one, that particularly recommended him to me; his love for dramatic literature. He told me, that during an early period of his life, he had wildly

resolved to try his success on the stage. Whether he would have succeeded *histrionically*, I cannot say; but that he has eminently succeeded, *historically*, thousands besides myself, will frankly acknowledge.

Some few years afterwards, I dined with Sir Sydney, at Andrews', in Cleaveland-row; almost immediately after his return from Acre, where he had so gallantly defeated Buonaparte, and his "tens of thousands." It may now be expected, that every person present, was highly interested in Sir Sydney's most unassuming relation of the different events connected with this memorable siege? Quite the contrary.—In spite of all the daring feats, and glorious victories of our different naval, and military commanders, sufficient, it might be supposed, to raise the wonder and envy of the world, yet on their return to their native land, "with all their blushing honours full upon them," how few of their countrymen will listen to their narratives; as if it were quite in the common course of events, that an Englishman, under the most disadvantageous and disastrous circumstances, should be always victorious; and that the captain of a man of war, in raising a most important siege, and with a handful of men, conquering the hitherto *unconquered* Buonaparte, had merely *done his duty!*

On the day to which I have just alluded, while the gallant Commodore was relating his story, and had "arrived at the thickest of the fight," an abstracted wealthy citizen, who sat opposite him, and who had the absurd trait of filing a little bill in Chancery against himself, mentally and *privately*, and then of answering it *publicly*, thus abruptly broke out,

"No—I'll tell you why I do not think half so well of Mr. Foster, my wine merchant, as I used to do; he says Sherry will rise, and therefore wants me to take a whole pipe. Now, Sir Sydney, don't you think that Sherry will fall?"

I have only to add, that I presume, Robespierre included this gentleman in his calculation, when he called us a nation of shop-keepers.

At Mr. Harris' house in St. James's-place, I met this year, another new acquaintance, Mr. Sheridan. Any attempt to praise this great man's oratorical, or poetical talents, would be

as difficult as supererogatory: it is sufficient to say that he made the celebrated speech on the Begum charge; and that he was the author of the *School for Scandal*, a comedy, certainly never equalled in success, and probably never surpassed in merit.

It has been said, in diminution of his talents, that Sheridan wrote with extreme difficulty;—what then? Whether each of his jokes cost him an hour or a month, are they, therefore, the less entertaining, in either the closet or the theatre? Probably, it would neither injure the discrimination, nor the judgment of Sheridan's censurers on this point, if they occasionally repeated to themselves those two old sayings;—“Slow and sure;” and “Easy writing is difficult reading.”*

On my way to Mr. Harris' residence, I met my brother Jack, and told him that I was going to dine with this great dramatist; Jack shook his head and calling him a great *dramatic forestaller*, added a quotation from his still favourite character,

“Remember, Fred,—Were he out of Venice you could have what merchandize you would.”

After dinner, Mr. Harris told Mr. Sheridan, that he had refused an opera, written by a celebrated *Bluestocking*; who, on bringing it to the theatre, added,

“There, Mr. Harris,—that, will make a splendid desert of new Drury Lane.”

“Indeed,” replied Sheridan, “then, as this very day, Lady Basbleu has presented her play to me, I suppose she means to keep her word.”

Conversing about dramatic literature, Sheridan furnished us with some particulars relative to the first night's performance of *The Rivals*. During the violent opposition in the fifth act, an apple hitting Lee, who performed Sir Lucius O'Trigger,

* In the *School for Scandal*, Sheridan has declined to use that staple commodity in the comedies of Congreve, and Vanbrugh, *double entendre*; thus he has gone to market, wanting the aid of the most efficient ally his predecessors possessed; *ergo*, as his difficulties have been greatly increased, greater fame ought to be attached to the man, who has so triumphantly surmounted them. Sheridan has also despised the faults of another school, *trap-claps*. Not a word in the *School for Scandal* is to be found in praise of Laws, Jack Tars, Innocence, an Englishman's *castellum*, or *Liberty*.

he stepped forward, and with a genuine rich brogue, angrily cried out,

“ By the pow’rs, is it *personal*?—is it me, or the matter?”

These were the only two theatrical anecdotes he related: his mind was so wholly devoted to the political drama, that I have no doubt, he was more proud of the before-mentioned speech on Mr. Hastings’s trial, than of all his dramatic productions combined. As a proof.—Instead of being annoyed, he seemed rather amused, when, one of the company inadvertently alluded to Merry’s remark, on the night of the first performance of the *School for Scandal*, at the close of the second act,

“ I wish the *dramatis personæ* would leave off talking, and let the play begin.”

But both his manner and countenance, expressed gratification, when another happily introduced on the tapis, Pitt, and the “ Angry Boy;”—a reply of Sheridan, that would alone have established any member, as a leading parliamentary character.

The intimacy between Mr. Harris, and Mr. Sheridan commenced in early life. On the birth of his first son, Mr. Harris became his godfather; the boy being named after him, Thomas.—I have even often heard it reported, that it was chiefly owing to the persuasion of Mr. Harris, that Sheridan first turned his mind to dramatic composition. The long, and warm eulogium lavished on Mr. Harris, both as manager and as friend, in the preface to the first edition of the comedy of *The Rivals*, in some degree confirms the truth of this statement.

It appears also, on his own confession, that during the whole progress of the composition, and production of *The Duenna*, Sheridan always heard with the greatest attention, the observations of the friend on whose sincerity, and judgment, he had so firm a reliance. Sheridan having become a proprietor of Drury Lane Theatre, he naturally ceased to offer his performances to Mr. Harris; but produced the *School for Scandal* on his own boards.

Though Mr. Harris deeply lamented the loss of this *thirty thousand pound prize* in the dramatic wheel, this separation

did not tend to diminish their mutual intimacy. On the contrary, it rather increased it; for, sometime afterwards, as managers of two of the principal theatres of London, determining to possess the third, they jointly took a long lease of the Opera House:—thus in fact, monopolizing the regulation of the whole theatrical amusement of the fashion of the town.

But, so decorous were they in their rivalry, and so convinced was each, that he himself should only be injured by a hostile conduct towards the other, that the *stars* of the one house more than once performed with the *stars* of the opposing company. This coalition commenced with Mrs. Barry playing *Alicia* to Mrs. Yates' *Jane Shore*, and, on those nights, the unprecedented, strong casts of the plays, ensured overflowing audiences. But this system, which owing to the recoil, fell on what is theatrically called the “off nights,” was soon abandoned: not from any diminution of their mutual good will, but from a diminution of their profits.

The Opera House speculation also failed, and indeed so completely, that to gain time for the payment of his losses, Mr. Harris was compelled to take a trip to Calais. I have often heard this gentleman assert, that on this occasion, Sheridan behaved with the utmost liberality, affording every assistance in his power, towards the liquidation of their mutual debts, and offering to release his friend from all personal danger in the affair.

“Go, Harris,” said he, “from circumstances, as you know, I can remain and face our creditors, and since the failure of our property will as usual be attributed to bad management, there will be so many, who will think themselves good managers, that I have little doubt of immediately getting a theatrical *bite*; and if I do, my friend, you have seen enough of my tickling style of *trout fishing*, to know that I will not lose the first *nibble*.”

Sheridan kept his word; for, not long afterwards, Sir John Gallini became their willing tenant. Mr. Harris immediately returned to England, and often since used to say, that, on this occasion, Sheridan's angling was even more excellent than usual, for, instead of having drawn a fish *out of the water*, it had kept a friend's head *above it*.

As a fair humorous specimen of *ruse contre ruse*, and of Sheridan's most adroitly *hoaxing the hoaxers*, I must add the following anecdote. I was walking, one day, with Tom King, in Pall Mall, when we met the celebrated clown, Grimaldi, father of the present Joe Grimaldi: approaching us with a face of the most ludicrous astonishment, and delight, he exclaimed,

“O vat a *clevare* fellow dat Sheridan is!—shall I tell you? —*Oui*,—Yes I vill—*Bien donc*—I could no never see him at de theatre, so je vais chez lui—to his house in Hertford Street, muffled in great coat, and I say, ‘*Domestique!*—you hear?’ —‘Yes.’—‘Vell, den, tell your master dat M. — de Mayor of Stafford be below.’ *Domestique* fly—and on de instant, I be shown into de drawing-room. In von more minute, Sheridan leave his dinner party, enter de room hastily, stop suddenly, stare, and say,—‘How dare you, Grim, play me such a trick? Then putting himself into a passion, he go on,—‘Go, sare!—get out of my house.’ ‘Begar,’ say I, placing my back against the door, ‘not till you pay me my forty pounds,’ —and then, I point to de pen, ink, and paper, on von small tables in de corner, and say—‘Dere!—write me the check, and de Mayor shall go *vitement—entendez vous?* If not, *morbleu*, I vill —’

“‘Oh!’ interrupted dis *clevare* man, ‘if I must, Grim, I must,’—and as if he were *très pressé*—very hurry—he write de draft, and pushing it into my hand, he squeeze it, and I do push it into my pocket. Vell den, I do make haste to de banker’s, and giving it to de clerks, I say, ‘Four tens if you please, Sare.’—‘Four tens!’ he say with much surprise—‘de draft be only for four pounds!’ O! vat a *clevare* fellow dat Sheridan is! But I say—‘If you please, sare, *donnez moi donc*, those four pounds.’ And den he say, ‘Call again to-morrow!’ Next day I meet de manager in de Street, and I say, ‘Mistare Sheridan, have you forgot?’ and den he laugh, and say, ‘Vy, Grim, I recollect afterwards—I left out the O?’—O! vat a *clevare* fellow dat Sheridan is!”

Some months afterwards, again meeting Grimaldi, I inquired of him, whether he had at last been paid. He replied in the affirmative, but with a look, and tone of voice, so altered,

that it seemed to say, he was better pleased with *Sheridan's humour*, than *Sheridan's money*.

The only slight difference I ever had with Sheridan, was, when after the destruction of Drury Lane Theatre by fire, the company performed at the Lyceum, one evening, on presenting myself at the box door, I was informed that my name was not on the free-list. A successful author deprived of his privilege!

“Oh, oh!” cried I, with *Pistol*, “all hell shall stir for this;” and I wrote to Mr. Sheridan to demand the restoration of my right. In his reply, he informed me, I might have some claim as author in passing free into the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, but I had no claim as to the Lyceum. To which, I answered, that my right did not follow the building—the *mere brick and mortar*—but it followed the *license*, or the *patent*, and wherever the Drury Lane company performed, whether at the Lyceum, or in a barn at Holyhead, there, I was entitled to pass free;—and that consequently, I should again present myself at the box door on the following evening, and if again refused admission, I should positively call a meeting of all dramatic writers, Colman, Cumberland, Morton, Holcroft, Hoare, Andrews, Cobb, &c., and take into immediate consideration what measures should be adopted. Two days afterwards, meeting Tom Sheridan in Piccadilly, he said—

“My father desires me to tell you, that you are a cursed troublesome fellow—and your name is on the free-list.”

“So much, then, my boy,” I rejoined, “for the advantage of being troublesome.”

However, time and experience have induced me to change my opinion upon this subject—on the part of the manager, it is evidently an affair of courtesy—for how is he to draw the line?—Where is the standard?—If the translator of a one act French piece, be entitled to a life free admission, what privilege ought not to be extended to the author of *School for Scandal*?

This year also, Mr. Curran must be added to the list of “New Acquaintances.” I remember having heard a celebrated barrister say of three other barristers, even more celebrated than himself, that one of them was a *gentleman*, but not a *lawyer*; that, the second was a *lawyer*, but not a *gentle-*

man; and that the third was neither *gentleman, nor lawyer*. Now, Mr. Curran was both lawyer, and gentleman ; though, not exactly either, in appearance ; for, as Jephson once told him, he always looked like a kitten crawling from under the grate.

To repeat any of this celebrated wit's stories, is a hazardous task, on account of the notoriety usually attached to them ; however, I will venture one. A garrulous gentleman having, during a whole evening, interrupted Curran, and the rest of the company with dull, incongruous stories, at length, unable to proceed beyond the middle of one of them, continued to repeat,

“ And so—and so—no, and so it being dark, Sir John said—no, the cook said—so—”

“ Stop, Sir,” impatiently cried Curran, “ I will finish your story for you.—So—they wanted a rush light!—and—so, the great *she* bear was walking about the town—so, *he* popped his head into the barber's shop, and said, ‘ What *no soap*? ’—so, —*he* died—*she* married the barber—the powder flew out of the counsellor's wig, and all Mrs. Mac Dab's puddings were spoiled—and so—so!—that's all!”

The unfortunate buffo to whom this *coup de grace* was addressed, seemed, at first, doubtful whether quietly to receive, or violently to resent it ; he stared looked fierce,—looked bewildered,—but, never spoke more during that evening.*

* When I was at Westminster, the above-mentioned *galimatias*, so whimsically expressive of the “ confusion worse confounded ” of a prosing prater, was in the mouths of all the boys, and was then universally attributed to Foote; I afterwards forgot it, and never heard it again, till the period just mentioned. This admirable actor I never saw but once, and that was in *Major Sturgeon*, in the *Mayor of Garratt*; and such was the excellence of his inimitable humour, that, even to this day, I have a distinct recollection of him, in particular scenes ; and I can remember the very tone, and expression he assumed, when, after describing the gallantry of his corps on marching home, he exclaims, “ We were all stopped, and robbed by a single highwayman ! ”—The first time that ever George the Second attended the Haymarket, this farce commenced the evening's performances. When his Majesty arrived at the theatre, Foote, as manager, hobbled to the stage door to receive him; but, as he played in the first piece, instead of wearing the court dress, usual on these occasions, he was equipped in the immense cocked hat, cumbrous boots, and all the other paraphernalia, and appurtenances of the most grotesque military uniform imaginable. The moment his Majesty cast his eyes on this extraordinary figure, as he stood bowing, stumping, and wriggling

“Now comes my fit again.” In spite of an indisposition, under which I had suffered much for some months, I was obliged to pursue the unpleasant task of writing another five act comedy,—which, when finished, was, after the usual course of rehearsals, produced in the month of November, 1796.

What Shakspeare says, in his description of Dover Cliff, may, without exaggeration, be applied to my profession:

“Dreadful trade!”

No doubt, such is also the trade of “one, who gathers sambhire;” but yet, he has *something* to gather. The commodity, though distant, is yet within the reach of industry; and he is secure of a certain, though small, remuneration. But, observe the danger of the adventurous playwright! What commodity has he before him? No *sambhire*,—nothing but a quire of *foolscap*. Over this, and only this, he stares, and sighs; till, judging from my own feelings, if he could send to a tavern, and instead of a dozen of wine, order *a dozen of jokes*, publicans would find in authors their very best customers. But, as this is not the case, and as the writer of a comedy, must labour, invent, cobble, crib, and then bow submissively to all despotic decisions, and anomalous opinions, of managers, actors, editors, reviewers, licensers, and last, not least, cockney auditors, though many must pity the dependent on sambhire, yet, I hope all will afford some sympathy to the dramatist, and repeat with me,

“Dreadful trade!”

This comedy was called *Fortune's Fool*, and was received very favourably. Amongst others, who congratulated me on its success, were, Dr. Moore, (the author of *Zeluco*,) Mr. Jerningham, and a gentleman, who had arisen from the subordinate situation of bricklayer's foreman, to be one of the leading architects of the metropolis.

Asking each of them, whether he could be kind enough to suggest any alterations, Doctor Moore, and Mr. Jerningham,

with his wooden leg, George the Second receded with astonishment, thus addressing his officers,

“Look! vat is dat man,—and to vat regiment does he belong?

replied "That as long as that fine actor, Lewis, with his usual vivacity, would continue to *run*, my play would continue also to *run*." But the architect was not so easily satisfied; he had a decided alteration to propose, and one, he said, of considerable importance,

"For," he added, "in the scene of Berkely square, painted by Richards, the *bricks* are much too large, and too red."*

In this comedy, luckily for the manager, and the innocent author, two characters were again decided to be personal;—*Tom Tackle*, and *Sir Bamber Blackletter*. The former, a gay kind hearted, fresh water sailor, was applied by this silly "hue, and cry," to the young Duke of Manchester;—because, at that time, he took the lead in aquatic amusement,—and the latter, to Mr. Ireland of Shaksperean notoriety. One of the points which told the most in the play, was in the scene, where, *Haphazard* contrives to pass on *Sir Bamber Blackletter*, (a great biblio-maniac,) the following lines, as originally written by Shakspeare:—

" **HINX, SPINX**
 The devil winks
 The fat begins to fry,
 Nobody at home, but jumping Joan,
 Father, mother, and I.
 o, u, t,
 out,
 With a black, and a brown snout
 OUT—POUT—OUT!"†

* The opinions of Doctor Moore, and Mr. Jerningham remind me of a *character* I once encountered, at Brighton. A *hair-dresser* attending me at one of the hotels of that place, for the purpose of shaving me, began in the usual manner that singular branch of the community, to discuss the affairs of the nation and then gradually descending to very minor topics, at last condescended to ask me whether I had seen Mr. Reynolds' new comedy? I asked him whether he had. "Yes, Sir," he replied, "and in my opinion, the young gentleman's success is entirely owing to Mr. Lewis' extraordinary bustle and activity. Oh, if that actor would but *stand still*, how I would *hiss* him!" Nobody, let me add, was ever more amused by this whimsical criticism than Lewis himself.

† Little did I think, when the character of *Sir Bamber Blackletter* was censured for its dramatic *breadth*, that I should live to meet with men *caricaturing* this *caricature*. Certainly, that term of *grandeur*, and *gratification*, *UNIQUE*, is, at this time, more in vogue than ever; particularly with the admirers of the antique

The day following the first representation of this comedy, I visited Mr. Ireland's, in company with my friend, Boaden, in order to see the supposed manuscripts of Shakspeare. After our examination of them, we walked away together ; and he told me, that, as he plainly perceived the hand of the conjuror, he should publicly expose the whole of the trick. This intention he shortly afterwards executed in a pamphlet, addressed to George Steevens : and without dwelling on the merits of a composition so highly approved of, I need only mention his later publication, "An Inquiry Relative to the Portraits of Shakspeare," to prove that no man was more calculated than Boaden, for such an exposition. Malone speedily followed the above mentioned gentleman with his "Vindication of Shakspeare," to which he attached this appropriate motto :—

"It is plain, in this slippery age, that it is very easy to make a book look as old as you would have it."—*Lord Chief Justice in Lady Joy's case.—Vide State Trials.*

Shortly afterwards, I was present at the first and last representation of *Vortigern* ; and notwithstanding the skilful attacks of Messrs. Boaden and Malone, our friend, *Bull*, plainly testified (by the wild enthusiastic applause bestowed during the prologue and the first act) that he was pre-determined to make a noble attempt to swallow by the wholesale, what so many great literary *Bulls* had previously, so eagerly swallowed in the retail. Indeed, I have now no doubt that honest John would have thoroughly succeeded in his voluntary self-deception, had there been a few more of the Shakspearian phrases,—the "Marry, go to," "Now, by my *Holydame*," and "so good morrow, good Master *Licutenant*;"—and if the management, instead of wavering, had been hearty in the cause,

in sculpture : to whom, an Apollo without a leg is invaluable ; a Cerberus with only one of his three heads is still more captivating ; and some even carry their enthusiasm so far, that, were such barter allowed, they would willingly exchange a lovely living *Venus* of twenty, for a *Venus* of *Lord Elgin's* of three thousand, without a nose, and with only half of one eye. After so many examples of the tendency of the taste of so large a portion of the public, who can be assured that antiquity and dilapidation will not at last be considered a beauty in the fair sex ?—*Elderly ladies* (*old* is an obsolete term) I give you joy.

Vortigern might have proved one of those unexpected glorious theatrical “*trouvailles*,” which, enabling the box book-keeper to stand up in his place and boldly say, “not a box to be had for a *month*,” regularly secures the letting every box for *a week*. This, has often happened; not altogether from the town’s desire to see the “*new wonder*,” but, partly from the conviction that no fashionable people dare to *show their faces* until they have *seen* it.

In *Vortigern*, Dignum had the honour to make the first laugh, Phillimore, the second, and Kemble, the third and last; for, I believe, nothing was ever heard after the following lines descriptive of death:—

“ And when thy solemn mockery is o’er,
 “ With icy hand thou *tak’st him by the feet*,
 “ And *upwards so*, till thou dost reach the heart,
 “ And wrap him in the cloak of lasting night.”

Still, beyond doubt, the author was a young man of no ordinary talent; as might be proved by some lines in this same speech of *Vortigern*:—

“ Churchyards and charnel houses are thy haunts,
 “ And hospitals thy sumptuous palaces;
 “ And when thou would’st be merry, thou dost choose
 “ The gaudy chamber of a dying king.”

Evidently the author had read and recollected Richard the Second; and by these and other clever lines sprinkled through the play, and by his consummate skill during the whole transaction, he certainly proves that Malone underrates him, when he quotes Pope, and talks of “pens which cannot write.” I beg it to be understood, that by this remark, I do not intend to advocate the propriety of the Shakspeare fabrication; but, when any person reads young Ireland’s Confessions, and sees the number of *enlightened people* he has amused and gratified, I think that he must ask himself, where is the moral turpitude of this imposition?

Fortune’s Fool was certainly not so successful as some of my previous comedies. However, it was acted twenty nights, and produced me *nearly* my usual dramatic income—five hundred pounds. For the deficiency, Morton whimsically ac-

counted, saying, in allusion to the characters of *Haphazard* and *Tom Tackle*—

“ Your tremendous attempts at originality will bring you to a work-house.”

There now remain to be added to the list of my “ new acquaintances,” first, the Reverend Charles Este, a gentleman of strong natural talents, and great literary attainments ; secondly, Mrs. Cowley, the ingenious author of the *Belle’s Strata-gem* ;* and, thirdly, *****, of the Foot Guards, one of the most amusing private actors of the day, and who, off the stage, was not less entertaining, particularly when, in the character of lover ; as, probably, will be proved by the following anecdote.

Once, at Margate, he was struck so violently, at first sight, with the tender passion for the youngest daughter of an Irish earl, that, from that day forth, he continued to haunt her, like a troubled ghost, at the ball-rooms, the libraries, and theatres. There, he would fix his eyes on her, roll them with a ludicrous expression of affected sensibility, fold his arms, and “furnace such thick sighs from him,” as not only to alarm the young lady, but the rest of the company. One whole night, he passed under her threshold, and committed such various extravagancies, that many of his friends, fearing, to the loss of his heart, he would at last conjoin that, of his senses, we applied to a friend of his family, Lady Wallace, urgently entreating her to interfere.

Her Ladyship authorized us to comfort the dying swain with the assurance, that, in the evening, she would introduce him to his idol ; and begged him, in the interim, to remember, that his rank, fortune, and connexions, afforded him every reason to hope the most prosperous result from her mediation. We repeated to him her Ladyship’s kind message, when, what was our astonishment, to hear him, with considerable irritation, reject her offer.

“ What !” said he, “ introduce me to my adored Lady Jane ?”

* As a further specimen of the ingenuity of this lady, let me add, that she publicly expressed her surprise at the town’s flocking to the “ *Rage*,” in which “ the chief incident was *Gingham* fencing with his left arm.”

" Ay !" triumphantly we exclaimed, " this very evening."

" Fools !" continued he, " do you wish to *destroy the interest?*"

We replied in surprise and confusion ; and quitted on the instant, this red coat reviver of the vigils, and whimsies of chivalry, this modern Amadis, Palmerin, and Quixote, determined henceforth to allow him to love in his own way.

Now, having introduced here a romantic lover, I may be allowed to hazard a few thoughts concerning romance ? What is romance ?—“ *Non mi ricordi;* ” which, (according to the authority of the cunning foreigner who first gave this phrase its notoriety,) may be translated,—I either do not know, or will not tell. But, I know what is *not* romance ; nothing with which we are *familiar*. A Savoyard attaches about as much romance to the *Alps*, as we do to *Primrose Hill*.

But it must not, consequently, be inferred, that every object increases in romance, proportionately to our ignorance of it. We know very little of the Squaws, the Caffres, and the Calmucks ; but that little has never yet induced any fair poetess to adopt them as a subject for her romantic flights.

According to the laws of true romance, nothing can surpass the meanness and crime of clothing a hero in coat and breeches ; yet, in all probability there will come both an age and a nation, by whom these useful and much underrated appendages will be considered as captivating, and as romantic, as are now, by us, the slashed doublet, the Turkish trowsers, and the Moorish turban. Let, therefore, the fair romancer ponder on this suggestion, and she will, no doubt, even in the present day, discover something interesting both in coats and breeches.

Colman, who, until this period, had chiefly confined his dramatic talents to three act plays, interspersed with music, (namely, the *Battle of Hexham*, the *Surrender of Calais*, *Mountaineers*, &c.) now began to increase the difficulties of my theatrical career by entering the comic lists, and displaying his original and sterling talent in the *Heir at Law*. Notwithstanding, however, its great and deserved success, necessity, “ *et duris urgens in rebus egestas*, ” forbidding me to be discouraged, I commenced a part for Mrs. Jordan ; and I la-

bourne so assiduously, and so *con amore*, that I finished the whole comedy by the end of January.

It was called *The Will*, and presented to Mr. Sheridan; by whom, it was immediately accepted. To show how comedies were acted in those times, I will add the cast.

MEN.

SIR SOLEMON CYNICK	-	-	Mr. King.
MANDEVILLE	-	-	Mr. Wroughton.
HOWARD	-	-	Mr. Banister, Jun.
VERITAS	-	-	Mr. R. Palmer.
REALIZE	-	-	Mr. Suett.
ROBERT	-	-	Mr. Russell.
OLD COPSLEY	-	-	Mr. Packer.

WOMEN.

ALBINA MANDEVILLE	-	-	Mrs. Jordan.
MRS. RIGID	-	-	Miss Tiddswell.
CICELY COPSLEY	-	-	Miss Mellon.
DEBORAH	-	-	Mrs. Booth.*

At this period, old Drury considered itself as *the* theatre; the only one, where the genuine legitimate comedy was represented in its original excellence. Sheridan was the manager, and several of the company having been contemporaries with Garrick, they regarded the Covent Garden school, (of which,

* Having given the cast of a *new* comedy at the *new* Drury Lane Theatre, I feel it a duty to give a cast of an *old* comedy, as I saw it acted at *old* Drury Lane.

THE WONDER.

MEN.

DON FELIX	-	-	Mr. Garrick.
COLONEL BRITON	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
DON PEDRO	-	-	Mr. Parsons.
GIBBY	-	-	Mr. Moody.
LISSARDO	-	-	Mr. King.

WOMEN.

FLORA	-	-	Miss Pope.
VIOLANTE	-	-	Mrs. Barry.

I was considered an appurtenance,) with a contemptuous eye. As a proof;—One morning during the rehearsal of the above-mentioned piece, when *Albina*, in the fifth act, has to say, “School’s up, school’s up!” Mrs. Jordan, King, Palmer, Wroughton, and Suett, widely differed as to the *author’s* meaning in this passage. One contended, that he meant it to be spoken feelingly; another said, that he evidently intended it to be comic; one took one side of the argument, and another, another; but, though I, the *author*, stood at their elbows, during the whole discussion, not one of them condescended to ask me, what I really did mean?

The comedy was performed April the 16th, 1797, preceded by a very pleasant prologue, written by Mr. John Taylor, who had before frequently aided me on similar occasions.* The first act received considerable applause; but, in the opening scene of the second, two or three sentences spoken by R. Palmer, being violently hissed, I had thereby the pleasure of being introduced to another *new* acquaintance, Cumberland, at that time, the established Drury Lane author. During the opposition, he rushed from the orchestra, where he was seated, to the green room, and requesting Wroughton, (then the acting manager,) to introduce him to me, the moment the ceremony was concluded, he exclaimed, with considerable irritation,

“Let *this*, be a lesson to you, young gentleman!”

Then taking snuff, he hastened back to the orchestra, evidently expecting, that I should be benefited by further correction. Wroughton expressed much anger at this singular conduct; but it moved me not; as poacher on Cumberland’s premises, he certainly might be excused firing one shot at me.

However, afterwards, to my infinite satisfaction, the third act, completely restored good-humour; and the fourth and fifth, owing to the inimitable acting of Mrs. Jordan, King, and John Bannister, only increasing the general success, the curtain dropped amidst the unanimous approbation of the audience, and to the great delight of the Drury *Dons* and *Donnas*,

* The idea of the parody on the “Seven Ages of Man,” introduced into the epilogue, was suggested to me by my friend, Mr. Rogers; by whom, also some of the best lines were written.

who after its termination, heartily shaking me by the hand, showed that they *then*, considered me, and ever afterwards treated me, as a *legitimate*.

I heard it rumoured, at that time, that, on the success of this comedy, depended the payment of the actors' salaries. I cannot say whether this report were true or false; for, though I have often heard it whispered, more than once, that Mr. Sheridan, occasionally, did not pay so punctually as he ought to have paid, I know, that to me, he was the same as the Bank of England. Every night, I regularly received, through the hands of his obliging worthy treasurer, Mr. Peake, the sum of thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eight pence, and from the profits of *The Will*, I, at this moment, possess in the funds, two hundred pounds, to which has been attached the name of "*Sheridan Stock*."

Miss Mellon, (now Mrs. Coutts,) performed the character of *Cicely Copsley*, the game-keeper's daughter, in this play, with considerable effect. I little thought, at that time, that I was to become the vassal of this young handsome *Cicely Copsley*. Mrs. Coutts is now my Lady of the Manor, for under her, I hold a small copyhold estate, near Chelmsford in Essex; and by an old feudal law, which though obsolete, is still un-repealed, she might compel me, *gout and all*, to attend, and serve at her next Highgate public breakfast, in **ARMOUR**.

CHAPTER. XVI.

GLEANINGS, AND MARRIAGE.

“ Is it not strange, and strange?
Nay,
This is all true as it is strange;
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth
To the end of reckoning.”

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

LORD SHAFESBURY says, “an author who writes in his own person, has the advantage of being *who*, or *what* he pleases. He is no certain man, nor has any certain nor genuine character; but suits himself, on every occasion, to the fancy of his reader, whom, as is the fancy, now-a-day, he constantly caresses and cajoles. All turns upon their two persons. And, as in an amour, or commerce of love letters; so, here the author has the privilege of talking eternally of himself, dressing, and sprucing up himself; whilst he is making diligent court, and working upon the humour of the party, to whom he addresses. This, is the *coquetry* of a modern author.”

I hope, that one portion of the above observations, may be considered applicable to these Memoirs; and that I have so “dressed,” and “spruced up” myself, that hitherto my *coquetry* has not been found wholly unendurable. Taking it for granted therefore, that no “cajolery” has been apparent, and that both parties are still on excellent terms, we will proceed, if you please, in our flirtation.

During this winter I again visited Topham at Thaydon Hall, and was again delighted, not only with the society of my host himself, but with that, of his three beautiful children—not inaptly called the “*infant Graces*;” but I was particularly cheered by the winning, playful manner, of my little favourite Juliet, who daily, more and more “gave promise of

her future charms.”* Topham was a most affectionate father, and his daughters being equally attached to him, though we heard the wintry storm without, all was jocund spring within. On the third day of my visit, I received a letter from a brother dramatist in London, (who had a play forthcoming at Drury Lane,) requesting me to relieve the general gravity of the story, by giving him a comic situation. I met his wishes, and having introduced what I conceived to be a scene of strong equivoque, I returned the MS. On my arrival in town, meeting Sheridan in the theatre, (who was not aware that I had been consulted,) he requested me to wait on the author as a friend, and persuade him to withdraw his play, Sheridan adding,

“ The piece, Sir, was very doubtful before, from its dull *sombre* character, but the bungler has taken such a frisk, and *irrelevantly* introduced such a broad grotesque situation, that I commit myself as to the failure of the play.” My scene, by Jupiter!

In the month of October, 1797, another new comedy of mine, called *Cheap Living*, was put into rehearsal at Drury Lane. Mrs. Jordan performed the character of *Sir Edward Bloomly*, a boy of fifteen, assuming all the airs, and manners of manhood. Bannister played the part of *Sponge*, a personage whose trait was, at that time entirely new to the stage; though since, so frequently introduced there, in various shapes, and forms. Mr. John Taylor again assisted me on this occasion—presenting me with a very clever prologue and epilogue.

During the composition of this comedy, in the Isle of Thanet, I frequently met at my friend, Mr. Sneyd’s (the famed dinner giver of the day,) Mrs. Fitzherbert—She was very dramatic, and used to laugh, and beg me not to think of dramatizing her. Mr. Sneyd very gallantly told her, I might probably have taken such a liberty, but, for one obvious objection,—there was no actress sufficiently handsome to resemble her.

Mrs. Jordan weary of male attire, did not like this boyish

* Now Mrs. Forde Bowes.

hero ; which, so nettled Wroughton, that during one of the rehearsals, in his plain, frank manner, he said to her,

“ Why, you are grand, quite the Duchess again this morning.”

“ Very likely,” she replied, “ for, you are not the first person, who, this very day, has condescended to honour me ironically with this title.”

Then smiling, without the slightest pique, and with all her characteristic humour, she told us, that having during that morning discharged her Irish cook, for impertinence, and paid her, her wages, the indignant professor of gastronomy, taking up a shilling, and banging it on the table, exclaimed,

“ Arrah, now, honey, with this *thirteener*, won’t I sit in the gallery, and won’t your Royal Grace give me a courtesy, and won’t I give your Royal Highness a howl, and a hiss into the bargain?”

Cheap Living was acted the latter end of October, and though by no means very successful, yet owing to the exertions of John Palmer, and Miss Pope, in *Mr. and Mrs. Scatter*—of Bannister’s rich representation of *Sponge*, and to Suett’s peculiar humour in *Old Woodland*, the curtain dropped with considerable applause.

The following morning, Kemble, who knew nothing of the success of the play, (having just arrived at the theatre, from his country house, at Stanmore,) approached me on the stage, and thus addressed me :—

“ Well, my dear Reynolds, where did the hissing begin?”—supposing, no doubt, according to his long established notions, concerning legitimacy, and classicality, that no *modern* comedy could escape that agreeable concomitant.

The profits of this comedy were paid to me in bills at three months, and which bills, Rogers (the firm friend of Sheridan, to the last moment of his life,) kindly, and I am happy to add, safely discounted, for, the bank of Sheridan was again punctual in its payment. However, *Cheap Living*, from various causes, having been performed only eight, or ten nights, my profits amounted to no more than three hundred and twenty pounds. “ No more!” cries the reader;—why, Mr. Dramatist, you are almost as modest as Fontenelle’s French actress,

whom because she died of the chicken-pox, he called, "Very modest indeed."

The next play put into rehearsal, was the *Castle Spectre*, written by Mr. M. Lewis; and though I heard every actor decidedly prophecy its inevitable damnation, few pieces have been more successful. Then, followed *Blue Beard*, and then *The Stranger*, both equally popular, and attractive. As to the latter, probably, Otway himself never surpassed the pathos of Kotzebue in this piece; though it appears to me, nothing can be more truly German, or whimsical, than the conduct of the interesting, penitent *Mrs. Haller*, during her half menial situation at *Count Wintersen's*, where, by old *Solomon's* account, she, thinking that charity covers a multitude of sins, coolly takes from the cellar of her master, "Some score of dozens of the old six-and-twenty hock!"

It is true, she gives them to the poor; but still, she gives away property which is not her own:—and thus, in her opinion, compensates in the eyes of Providence, for six weeks' pleasant "*entretien*" with a young, and gay seducer. Yet, in spite of these defects, in my humble opinion, the catastrophe is one of the most affecting, and effective on the stage.

The bold attempt of making husband and wife meet under such difficult circumstances, and when met, the admirable taste, delicacy, and feeling, with which the whole progress of the explanation is conducted, and the skill with which the conclusion is effected, prove that, while Kotzebue had no small knowledge of human nature, he had full command over the human passions. Yet, how usual is it, that all those tears of sympathy, shed during the course of this beautiful interview, and in reality, so many homages to the talents of the author, are pertinaciously considered, by the public, as principally resulting from the merits of the performers. Pending the *O'Neill mania*, the very name of Kotzebue was forgotten; the actress *wrote* the part, as well as *acted* it. But, it is well known to the discriminating few, conversant with the stage, that there are some scenes so admirably written, and so skilfully planned, that technically speaking, *they play themselves*. Indeed, so powerful is the pathos of the scene under consideration, that I am almost inclined to think, if with the

idea of burlesquing it, Matthews had ever performed the part of the *Stranger*, and Liston, *Mrs. Haller*, to their surprise, they would probably have found, that on that evening, they were, for the first time, rather tragedians, than comedians.

The publisher of this play, after the death of Palmer, is said to have sold fifteen hundred additional copies; the sectarians being the chief purchasers, in consequence of the promulgation of a report, that the last words of the deceased before he expired, were,

“There is another, and a better world!”

Now this passage was, instantly by the methodists, most adroitly, confirmed, and hawked about the town, as a means of enforcing their anti-dramatic tenets, and of convincing their disciples, that it was evidently indicative of a judgment, induced by the impiety of the whole histrionic race; but, Mr. Whitfield, (*not* the preacher,) who played *Baron Steinfort* on that memorable occasion, assured me, more than once, that poor Palmer fell before him, on the stage, while answering the former’s inquiry relative to the *Stranger’s* children, and that the following were *positively* his last words—

“I left them at a small town hard by.”*

* It may not be inappropriate to introduce here another curious coincidence, perhaps little known in this country; I mean the death of Molière. The chief personage in one of Molière’s best plays, the *Malade Imaginaire*, is a sick man, who pretends to be dead. On the fourth night of the performance of this piece, Molière represented that character, and consequently was obliged in one of his scenes, to act the part of a dead man. “It has been said,” continues Bayle, from whom I take this account, “that he expired during that part of his play, where he is told to make an end of his feint; but he could neither speak, nor arise, for he was stone dead.” But it is said in the Life of his wife, from whom Bayle afterwards quotes, that this sudden attack commenced in the part, “where he speaks of rhubarb, and senna, in the ceremony of the physicians, when blood pouring from his mouth, to the great terror of the spectators, and his friends, he was immediately carried home, but expired within a few hours after his arrival.”

On this occasion the following smart epitaph was written:—

“*Ci git, qui parut sur la scène
Le singe de la vie humaine;
Qui n’aura jamais son égal;
Qui voulant de la mort ainsi que de la vie,
Etre l’imitateur dans une comédie,
Pour trop bien réussir y réussit fort mal:*

The next play taken from the German, and acted, was the far-famed *Pizarro*; which, on the first night, notwithstanding, that it excited, in many scenes, much just, and genuine applause, yet, in the last act, encountered so much violent opposition, as then to give but little presage of its future triumphant career. Conversing with Sheridan's friend, Richardson, after the fall of the curtain, he told me, that not only he himself was much vexed and disappointed by this unexpected reception, but that Sheridan, to whom every species of dramatic opposition was then new, had retreated to the Piazza Coffee House, greatly annoyed, and discomfited.

The introduction of the character of *Diego*, *Alonzo's* servant, so conspicuous in the *Virgin of the Sun*, which may be considered as the first part of *Pizarro*, was, in this latter play, perfectly anomalous, and though acted by Suett, soon proved himself to be "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable."

Mrs. Jordan, in *Cora*, was also a failure; and though Mrs. Siddons, by her fine taste, and majestic manner, in a great degree elevated Kotzebue's *soldier's trull*, *Elvira*, (that campaigning lady, with a lurking *penchant* for *Alonzo*,) yet, that this *outré* character did not excite the slightest interest, is rendered clearly evident by the fact, that a *loud laugh* saluted the entrance of Mrs. Siddons, when, during the last scene, she presented the overpowered, and disarmed *Alonzo*, with a sword. To this list of failures among the *dramatis personæ*, must be added, R. Palmer, in *Valverde*, who likewise excited his share of laughter on the occasion.

However, on the second night, after certain alterations, and omissions, (amongst which, was the whole of the character of *Diego*, without whose incumbrance, the play has ever since continued to be performed) the beauties of Sheridan, and Kot-

*Car la mort en étant ravie,
Trouva si belle la copie,
Qu'elle en fit un original."*

To these two curious dramatic coincidences, the following ought to be attached: —Farquhar died during the run of the *Beaux Stratagem*; Hughes expired within an hour after he had received the account of the success of the *Siege of Damascus*; and those phenomena in literature, Shakspeare, and Cervantes, quitted the world, they had adorned, on the same day, to live in their works for ever.

zebue, heightened, and improved by the splendid acting of John Kemble in *Rolla*, and Mrs. Siddons in *Evira*, burst on the audience with an unencumbered magnificence; and *Pizarro* so decidedly succeeded, that I have heard, it produced to the treasury on its first sixty nights, the enormous sum of thirty thousand pounds.

Johnson said, that probably the most pathetic passage in the English language, is that, uttered by *Jane Shore*, in her dying scene:—

“ Forgive me,—but forgive me!”

Now, may I not venture to ask, if the great Lexieographer, had lived to hear *Rolla* say, in answer to *Cora*’s exclamation,

“ My child, and bloody!”

ROLLA. “ Cora, it is *my* blood!”

Would not the Doctor on having heard this simple, touching reply, instantly have doubted whether Rowe or Kotzebue had written the most pathetic passage in the English language?

At Covent Garden, the manager endeavoured to counterbalance the effects of these powerful novelties at Drury Lane, by restoring to the town three very old favourites, Mrs. Abingdon, Mrs. Crawford, and Madame Mara. I say *very old* favourites, because, I believe, on the aggregate, their united ages amounted to nearly *two hundred years*.

Mrs. Crawford prudently made her *entré* in the matronly line; *Lady Randolph* was the character she chose for her first appearance. But the other two patriarchal ladies, Mrs. Abingdon and Madame Mara, struggling to the last, commenced their engagements in those interesting spinsters, *Beatrice* and *Polly*. Westminster Abbey, decorated with gilding, garlands, and tinsel, could not have appeared more ridiculous. No wonder that statutes and expensive tombs are so rarely raised to the memory of the *beau sexe*, when it is seen how often they live to be their own monuments. This dramatic resuscitation, however, failed so completely, that I heard Mr. Harris vow, that as long as he continued manager, he would never again make his appearance as a *resurrection man*.

During this year, and the former one, I passed some very pleasant hours at the Royal Kentish Bowmen’s Lodge, on

Dartford Heath; Andrews and Leigh's houses, in the neighbourhood, being alternately my head-quarters. One of the most agreeable days I passed there was, that on which his present Majesty honoured the Kentish Bowmen with his presence.

But though the termination of the day was so pleasant, I must confess the commencement was by no means promising, owing to a mistake of the late Lord Eardley; who, having ordered a large cannon to be placed on the lawn, for the purpose of announcing the arrival of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, insisted on loading it himself; but in his loyalty and zeal, he so crammed and charged it, that when in the act of being fired, it burst; and whilst the force of the explosion instantaneously overthrew this hearty, jovial peer, sundry annoying fragments forming a too social contact with the horses and carriages, threw the whole cavalcade into excessive confusion, which confusion acted so strongly upon the nerves of my friend, Andrews, and rendered him so irascible, that he attacked every body indiscriminately; first, a grave old banker; next, the Honourable Mrs. H——; then Topham, who coolly replied—

“Instead of being angry, you ought to be delighted, Andrews; since every body here allows, you are the *sole cause* of nobody having suffered by the accident.”

“I the sole cause, my dear Sir—I?”

“Certainly,” rejoined Topham; “the cannon having been loaded with your *humane* gun-powder.”

Here Andrews himself had nearly exploded, when the entrance of his Royal Highness engrossing universal attention, my friend's angry ebullitions, which were always very short-lived, instantaneously subsided, and he, like the rest of the Archers, exerted his best efforts to contribute to the entertainment of his Prince and Patron.

As I have before remarked on the charm of good manners, I now only recur to that subject, for the purpose of saying, that I never beheld them so eminently conspicuous as in the Prince of Wales. There was a native dignity in his manner, a suavity and elegance in his style, even more calculated to procure him regard and admiration as a man, than obedience

and respect as a Prince. He was, indeed, that perfect gentleman, who never for a moment showed—

“ Defect of manners, want of government,
“ Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain,
“ The least of which haunting a nobleman,
“ Loseth men’s hearts.”

After dinner, there was a ball and supper ; in truth, every species of amusement was going forward except *archery* ; thus affording the reverse of those days when Sir William Davenant, in a mock poem, describing the incessant assiduity of the Archers in Finsbury Fields says—

“ Sol sets for fear they’ll shoot at him.”

London, on my return, was in the same state as when I left it ; politics were still the order of the day. The monopolizing subject then was the landing of General Tate, with the twelve hundred French from three frigates at Fishguard, in South Wales, who on the third day, so *bloodlessly* surrendered to Lord Cawdor, and a detachment of the Cardiganshire militia, supported by the spirited, red-cloaked female *Taffies*, who, from the distance, were by the French supposed to be also soldiers. Yet, this *ruse*, this absurd invasion, created such a panic, and gave such a shock to commercial credit throughout the kingdom, that the invaders, though defeated, might have fairly laid claim to a victory.

At this period, too, the mutiny at the Nore so considerably increased the general alarm, that every man daily became more and more versed in politics ; and the *two theatres* which attracted the most crowded audiences, were those in *Palace Yard*. Certainly, the two houses of parliament had then a right to boast of a most excellent company, for, among the list was included those first-rate actors, Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan ;—Burke having retired from political life at the conclusion of Hasting’s trial.

I once more regularly attended the debates, and was present in the house on that night, when such a war of words took place between Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Tierney, that it ended, next morning, in a duel on Putney Heath ; the result so honourable to both parties, is too well known to need repetition.

Mr. Pitt, according to my humble opinion, was the most impressive and commanding orator of this period. When he began to speak, many a frightened member seemed to express by his looks,

“ I fear the thunder will fall on me.”

That it fell somewhere, is evident from his having frequently converted so many a premeditated “ No” into a willing “ Ay.” Certainly no Dennis* in or out of parliament, ever doubted the force, or originality of Pitt’s thunder.

Fox, during the commencement of his discourse, was almost unintelligible ; “ sputtering it,” as a vulgar critic of that day, once said, “ like a roasting apple.” But when this defect disappeared, and he could arrange his rapid ideas—then came the burst of eloquence ; at the same time conjoined with a benevolence so apparent, that while it excited a universal admiration for the orator, it gained a universal regard for the man. His style was at once plain, nervous, and eloquent ; it simplified whatever was complicate, identified whatever was obscure, and through the understanding, forced its way to the heart. Still, in spite of all these powerful recommendations, Gibbon did not anticipate rightly, when he said, “ That Billy’s *painted galley*, would soon sink under Charles’ *black collier*.”

Sheridan, however, was never completely distanced by the best efforts of these splendid competitors, but frequently came in, “ *neck and neck*.” No member, in either house, possessed a more happy vein, of ridicule, or was more successful in his replies, as Pitt, and others, often disagreeably experienced. Neither did any surpass Sheridan, according to the minister’s own words, “ in elegant sallies of thought, in gay effusions of fancy, or in rich dramatic, and epigrammatic allusions.” To which potent co-operators, in the political theatre, must be conjoined the consideration that his eminence in another theatre procured him :—neither Pitt, nor any of his allies, could ever forget, that Sheridan was the author of *The Rivals*, and the *School for Scandal*.

* Dennis, the dramatic writer, who having in a refused tragedy introduced thunder on a novel principle, always exclaimed, whenever this *Jupiter Tonans* was made use of in any other new play with effect ;—“ *That’s my thunder*.”

Burke had (as before stated) withdrawn himself from public life, principally owing to the death of a favourite son, but still he lived in every body's recollection. This splendid orator has been compared to Demosthenes, Cicero, and other ancient orators ; why, I know not, for their style, I believe, was usually declamatory ; Burke's was the very reverse, for though he occasionally lost himself in an affected display of metaphorical allusions, yet generally he was sufficiently impassioned, torrent like, to carry all opposition before him. On the subject of the French revolution, he surpassed all his previous most glorious efforts, and erected to himself a monument, that will declare to posterity his superior foresight ; yet even in his most enthusiastic speeches on this subject, he frequently introduced that mixture of high and low, of coarseness and elegance, always so apparent in various passages, that a sarcastic wit was induced to say,

“ Though most graceful and enchanting, is the muse of Burke, yet it must be owned, she sometimes drinks too much whiskey.”

It is a singular circumstance, and well worthy of remark, how few lawyers have ever been eminently successful as parliamentary speakers. Even on legal points, ministers have often defeated them ; particularly on the Regency question, where the gentlemen of the long robe, regularly so floundered, and differed in their arguments, that Burke said, he was anxious to know whether these *resuscitators of dead ink*, had been all the time speaking in *jest or in earnest* ?

Yet probably one of the best replies ever heard in parliament, was that of a lawyer,—Lord Thurlow. It was addressed to a noble peer, who, after much warm language, had intemperately reproached Lord Thurlow with his plebian extraction, and the recent date of his peerage. To this charge, his Lordship replied in the following manly tone,

“ Let the noble peer say if he do not see around him, many who owe their seats in this house, to their own, or their ancestors' exertions, in the profession to which I belong ? Does he not feel, that it is as honourable to owe it to these, as to being the *accident of an accident* ? No one venerates the peerage more than I ; but I must say, that the peerage soli-

cleed me, not *I*, the peerage. Nay, more, I can say, as Lord High Chancellor of England, nay, even in that character which cannot be denied to me, as a MAN,—I am at this moment as respectable,—I must be allowed to add, I am at this moment as much respected, as the proudest peer on whom I now look down!"

The sensation produced by this memorable reply, was, as may be supposed, electrical.

This circumstance, however, is but an exception to a general rule; and I repeat, that few, very few have combined, forensic and senatorial oratory. As a partial proof of the correctness of this assertion, two celebrated cases may be produced. Pitt, who, for so many years, shone so pre-eminently in parliament, never succeeded at the Bar; and Erskine, who was a first rate orator in Westminster Hall, was scarcely a third rate, in the House of Commons.

Many years previously to the period now alluded to, I accompanied my father on the western circuit; and, in an action for bribery, brought by the unsuccessful candidate, for a Wiltshire borough, I heard Pitt, plead at Salisbury. Being very young, I have but little recollection of the manner or character of his opening speech, but, I perfectly remember, that he totally failed in the cross-examination of a witness: seeming, to me, to feel himself above the situation, and perhaps, anticipating, what afterwards proved to be the case;—that, instead of pleading as junior barrister, at an inferior court, he should shortly be considered in a superior court, as *leading orator, judge, and jury.**

* Perhaps, I may be allowed to attach to this cursory review of oratorical life, a specimen of the style of one of the most entertaining orators, ever heard. This gentleman was an attorney's clerk, and an assiduous attendant at the *Westminster Forum*: where "teapotting one arm, and spouting with the other," he in a most important tone and manner, delivered the following memorable speech, *tatidem verbis*:

"Sir, I am sensible—very sensible—extremely sensible;" then, suddenly interlarding this happy commencement with a quotation of bad Latin, he looked wisely round the room, and continued, "So!—do any of you know what that means?—no! and *I wont tell you!*" Then, pursuing the sublime effusion amidst cries of "Order, order!—Hear, hear!" he concluded with the following loyal figurative apostrophe.

" May he be the king of kings, the sovereign of sovereigns, and the ruler of

So much for the political drama; now, once more for "*flies light as air.*" A slight theatrical dispute having arisen between Colman and Holman, the parties at length agreed that it should be decided by arbitration: and Prince Hoare, author of those agreeable farces, *The Prize*, *My Grandmother*, *No Song no Supper*, and others, was chosen arbitrator.

Holman having produced a new play at the Haymarket, complained that the insignificance of the receipts on the author's nights, was wholly owing to want of support on the part of the manager. During the first meeting at the arbitrator's chambers, where, I attended as witness, that gentleman asked Holman *how* he had expected the manager to have supported his nights? Holman, confused and agitated by passion, replied—

“Why, certainly not by giving me the weakest entertainments on the stock list.”

“Then, pray,” continued Prince Hoare, “may I be allowed to inquire what those entertainments were?”

“Why, Sir,” replied Holman, still more indignant and confused, “the first night he gave me *The Prize*; the second, *My Grandmother*; and the third, *No Song no Supper*. Now, Sir, do you not think I have cause for complaint?”

Luckily for Holman, though the great success of these despised farces would have made many an author vain, Prince Hoare did not possess a particle of vanity; and therefore, laughed most heartily at this *mal-a-propos* answer. In a few days afterwards, he made an award perfectly satisfactory to both parties.

I was likewise concerned in another literary dispute, which occurred about this period. Calling one morning with Murphy, on his friend, Edward *****, a great theatrical dabbler and dangler, the servant informed us that his master was not at home; when, Murphy having something to communicate to him, asked for pen, ink, and paper. We were shown into the parlour, and Murphy proceeding to write a note to his

ruers—may his train be held up by Europe and Asia—and Africa—and America—and to give the aggregate of complicate power—may he—may he”—(wholly at a loss for want of a simile sufficiently hyperbolical) “may he be,—HISX, Lew, JACK, and the GAME!”

friend, opened the inkstand drawer, and drew from it a sheet of paper; when, great and ineffable was the astonishment he evinced, as he read, written on it, with his own dear Edward's hand, the following

“ EPIGRAM ON ARTHUR MURPHY.

“ Who'er shall challenge this dull wight,
“ Perchance may perish in the fight,
“ Without revenge; for Arthur's pate
“ With lead would but assimilate.”

When, my companion had finished the perusal of these friendly lines, without uttering a word, expressive of either spleen, or contempt, he sat down, and on the same sheet wrote the following—

“ EPIGRAM ON EDWARD *****

“ An adder, hid 'mongst new mown hay,
“ Bit this keen biter t'other day;
“ From pain malignant Edward cried,
“ But the poor serpent droop'd and died.”

Then, returning the sheet of paper into the drawer, we instantly left the house.

Murphy was, however, so totally opposite to his friend Edward in mind and disposition, so completely free from malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness, that I had very little difficulty in persuading him to forget and forgive.

The next dispute, (for, there was another,) was probably of as trivial a nature as either of the foregoing. Twisleton, having married a very pretty woman, Miss Wattle, (I believe against the consent of his brother, Lord Say-and-Seale, and the rest of his family,) many, who were acquainted with the young married couple, soon anticipated that, according to the old hacknied cause, “ faults on both sides,” or some other cause, the parties would disagree. That, they were not wrong in such anticipation will speedily appear.

One day, while I was at the Temple, Twisleton called upon me, and asking me to accompany him in his gig to a cricket match at Bray, in Berkshire, I accepted his proposal, and we both immediately started on our excursion. He proved to be in unusually high spirits; but before I could ask him the “ why or the wherefore,” he himself volunteered an explana-

tion of the cause. He had that morning signed articles of separation with his wife ; he was once more “ free as mountain air,” and neither of them knew or cared what course the other would pursue.

We took a late dinner at the inn at Cranford Bridge, and renewing our journey during the dusk of the evening, we drove jovially along, till we approached a turnpike ; where, we saw a London stage-coach stationary, and surrounded by a small crowd. Alighting from our gig to inquire the cause, we learned that two ladies, having been grossly insulted by an inside passenger, they had stopped the coach, and had taken refuge in the turnpike house.

Then directing our attention towards the aggressor in this affair, we saw a stout, athletic man preparing to pursue his game even into their cover ; when, the guard and coachman interfering, a violent scuffle ensued, in which, the two unfortunate champions of the oppressed were levelled with the dust. The triumphant bully now offered to fight the turnpike man, who, declining the compliment with extreme civility, the challenger made a similar proposal to the rest of the ring in succession ; but it being again declared objectionable to the *gout* of the assembled company, he prepared to enter the house ; when, Twisleton, to my horror and astonishment darting before the door, laughed provokingly in his face.

My friend, though undoubtedly the best private boxer of his day, bore on his “ external man” no indication of this formidable character. His figure was light and elegant, the expression of his countenance mild and pleasing, and his height about the common stature. *Samson Agonistes*, therefore, making sure of another victim, indignantly advanced to annihilate him with one blow ; but, he soon found that it was easier to resolve than execute ; for, he might as well have fought a *Harlequin* or *Will-o'-th'-Wisp* as my active, shifting, parrying friend. Not one blow, therefore, like the Frenchman’s “ Ode to Posterity,” *reaching its address*, his brutal assailant first lost his temper, and then his strength, and at last became so exhausted, that Twisleton, driving him against the turnpike house, and making every blow tell, exclaimed—

“ There now, you can neither guard nor fall. So take that—and that—and that—my old Tarquin.”

So forcibly did he adapt the gesture to the matter, "that the disabled and penitent aggressor repeatedly asked pardon and mercy, vowing that he would never again molest a lady as long as he lived. But, nothing would satisfy the conqueror, till the vanquished pledged himself to abandon his seat in the coach, and proceed on his journey in another conveyance.

Twiselton then entering the house to assure the ladies that they might now continue their route with perfect security, beheld to his astonishment and mine—his wife!—the other female being her servant.

Mrs. Twiselton courtesied to her deliverer, and returned him thanks with much politeness and *nonchalance*; he bowed, and taking her by the hand with formal gallantry, assisted her into the carriage, then, wished her good night,—and from that time forth they never met again.*

During this year, I lost my affectionate, and excellent relative Miss Reynolds of Trowbridge. She bequeathed the whole of her fortune, in equal shares, and proportions, to her three nephews, Richard, Jack, and myself. I mention this circumstance principally, because, it was asserted in the newspapers of that period, and consequently believed, that I had inherited in this legacy, a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. Even with the omission of an 0, the statement would be exaggerated; for, twelve hundred pounds was the whole of my aunt's kind bequest; and which bequest, or rather, one to the same amount, at least, I lost during the course of the following year, in consequence of these newspaper accounts: another testator omitting me from his will, on the principle, that the rich Mr. Reynolds must be above accepting any pecuniary assistance.

I almost suspect that this report must have originated from some secret enemy, artfully conceiving that few means could be more likely to injure a poor man, than to give him the reputation of a rich one; not only affecting him in a pecuniary, but in a moral point of view, inducing his friends, and the public, to consider him as mean, and avaricious by inclination, when he is only prudent, and economical by compulsion.

* It must be here remembered, that, at this period, Mr. Twiselton had not taken orders, and had only recently left college.

LIFE OF FREDERICK REYNOLDS.

... end of this season, wishing to return to my old
... at Covent Garden, I had an interview with my
... Mr. Harris, at Knightsbridge, and proposed to him to
... a new comedy on the following terms; one hundred
... pounds on the third, sixth, and ninth nights; fifty pounds, on
... the fifteenth, and twentieth nights; and one hundred and fifty
... pounds for the copyright.

To these proposals, he liberally acceded; and this new
agreement superseding the former, during a few years, it con-
tinued a precedent for Morton, and Mrs. Inchbald. But, that
it was not always scrupulously followed, I know; for, Morton
received one thousand pounds for *Town and Country*, before
it was acted; and Mrs. Inchbald, (as I heard) eight hundred
pounds for *Wives as they were, and Maids as they are*, also,
previously to representation.

To this, my ninth comedy, when finished, I gave the name
of *Laugh when you can*; it was immediately read in the
green room, and put into rehearsal. Nothing occurred during
its composition worthy of narration, nor during its rehearsal,
any thing, but the usual annoyances: which, however, were
considerably mitigated by the interest I took in a young
actress, who performed in the comedy, the part of *Emily*.

Laugh when you can was performed in December, 1799,
and being performed above twenty nights, I received for my
profits, five hundred and fifty pounds. Certainly, therefore, I
had no right to complain of either the losses I sustained, or of
the expenses I incurred, by my connexion with the cricket
club; for, to that hoaxing source my *hoaxing* comedy owed
its existence.

During the rehearsals of *Laugh when you can*, my friend
Wroughton, who attended one of them, invited me to dine
with him, at his house in Charlotte Street Bedford-square, to
meet Tom King, and other theatrical friends. The last time,
that I dined at this very abode, I was a little Westminster boy,
and the proprietor was a man of fashion, then, lately married
to a young Welsh heiress. Wilkes accompanied my father, and
me and when, we arrived there, we found, among the company,
many of the most popular characters of the day. But, neither
master, nor mistress were present, and the guests, during a

considerable time, mutually expressed their surprise, and curiosity, as to the cause. No explanation offering itself, the former feelings began to be changed for others, of a more irascible nature; and at last, after continuing in this state of suspense above an hour, Wilkes yielding to his impatience, violently rang the bell, when, the cook, in the most evident distress, appeared before us. To the questions of the company, as to the cause of this extraordinary conduct, she replied, with much confusion,

“ My mistress, Sir, has suddenly eloped with a young officer; and my master, is now in pursuit of her, with all the male servants of the family.”

Under these circumstances we had no alternative but to resort to the Star and Garter, Pall Mall; where, we dined, and drank the new married couple’s health, with “many happy returns of the day.”

This house, however, I suppose, was destined to be fertile in incidents; for, the day that I dined there with Wroughton another odd circumstance occurred. My host having that same morning met an Irish lawyer in the streets, thought it necessary to invite him to dinner, in consequence of some civilities received from him in Dublin. When he entered the room, Wroughton, for his “very life, and soul,” could not remember his visitor’s name; an event, that naturally threw so punctilious a man as Wroughton into considerable confusion; a confusion which was trebly increased, when the gentleman requested to be introduced to Tom King. At this moment the announcement of dinner, saved Wroughton from his dilemma; and giving him time for reflection, he thought of the following artful method of gaining the desired information:

“ Here is Mr. Aickin, Sir,” he exclaimed, addressing himself to his anonymous Irish acquaintance, who sat at some distance from him; “ here is Mr. Aickin, Sir, who has laid a wager with another gentleman, relative to the orthography of your name. Will you therefore be kind enough to spell it?”

“ Certainly, Sir,” replied the Irishman; “ with two b’s.”

Here was the real Westminster Hall botheration, and Wroughton’s sagacity was again set to work, but he knew not what trick next to devise. Just, however, as he was about to

succumb to his ill luck, some accidental conversation informed him, that the stranger wrote orders for the Opera House. Now, thought Wroughton, I am sure of my mark; and with a short apology for the abruptness of the request, he immediately asked him to write two admissions for the pit. The lawyer consenting, wrote what was desired; but, in one of those illegible, legal hands, to which gentlemen of his profession are habituated, and which hieroglyphicks,—though they aid the law's *glorious uncertainty*, and materially benefit opticians, and oculists,—confound the senses of all other professional characters.

Here came “increase of torment,” for, poor Wroughton could not decipher one syllable of the composition; so, after a few more strenuous, but futile efforts, he confessed the fact, and boldly asked the Irishman to relieve him from further suspense and vexation, by telling his name.

“Ah! by my soul now,” he replied, “I have made your mistake myself before now; but d’ye-mane my *raal*, or my *nick-name*? For though I was baptized Dennis Robbins, with *two b’s*, yet, as you may persave, my right eye baing larger than the left, though my dear mither used to call them the *Sun* and the *Star*, yet the rogues in the four courts, by the Powers! chose to name me ‘Lawyer *Eighteen-pence*.’* However, there’s no harm done, my *honies*; for you must acknowledge ‘tis better than the old title of ‘Lawyer *Thirteen and four-pence*.’”

After this merry explanation, King told us not an unamusing story of the amiable and beautiful Duchess of Devonshire. During the celebrated contest for Westminster, it is well known that her Grace personally canvassed for her friend, Charles Fox. While engaged in this employment, calling at a house in Dean Street, a gentleman, that she supposed in course to be the landlord, very politely received her. When she requested his vote, he gallantly replied, that, though he would not willingly refuse her Grace any thing, he could only grant her request on one condition—a chaste salute. The Duchess, being far too good humoured and patriotic to refuse so innocent a request,—or a payment so harmless to herself,

* Or “Lawyer *One-shilling-and-six-pence*,” I cannot distinctly recollect which.

and to the pockets of the patriot she supported,—turning her cheek, allowed him to seal the bargain; when, having learned his name, she proceeded, according to form, to inquire how long he had kept the house?

“These two months,” he replied.

“What, from Christmas?” she continued.

“Please your Grace, no—from *illness*,” replied the arch *lodger*; for, such was this deceiver, who had thus coolly walked off with as high a bribe as any which had been received during the course of this memorable contest.

That the Duchess of Devonshire had too much taste to be annoyed or disconcerted by this adventure, is evident; as she herself was the very person who had told the story, with much satisfaction, to Sheridan, from whom Tom King received it.

I cannot leave this delightful actor and companion, without relating one more of the many light brief anecdotes, he, that day, so pleasantly and characteristically narrated. Two ordinary violin players, in the Covent Garden band, had long quarrelled most violently on that question, so frequently and so tumultuously discussed among the high, and low, of the theatrical and musical world—“*Which is the better player?*” The quarrel, at length, increased to such a pitch, that each tweedle-dum offered the opposing tweedle-dee, to play him for his whole year’s salary.

All this *ex parte* transaction, for a time, only served for “sweet discourse” among themselves; but at last, their feuds interrupting the harmony of the band, and, in a great measure, that of the pit, the manager being necessarily compelled to interfere, told them, that both must either quit his employment, or allow the cause of dissension to be judged by their leader, Mr. Baumgarten, better known by the undesired cognomen attached to him by the gods of the theatre—“*Nosey*.”

The two rivals acceding to this latter proposal, they agreed to play for their original stakes; and the appointed day being arrived, their judge heard them, till they concluded, with the utmost attention; when, being requested to decide, he took about half an ounce of snuff, and pronounced the following award with much solemnity:

“Von gentleman do play *very bad*, t’oder gentleman do *no play at all*.”

But, now to return to much more serious matter. This, was the most awful period of my life ; an assertion that, I believe, few will be inclined to contradict, when I add that this was the year of my—marriage.

The young actress of the name of Mansel, to whom I have before alluded, was destined to make me forego all my determinations in favour of “blessed singleness.” Stage-struck, this young lady abandoned family, friends, and the prospect of a fine fortune, for the transporting delight of treading the boards : and, like a true heroine, without the slightest previous declaration of her intentions, she ordered a post-chaise, and accompanied by her maid, with a light heart, and purse almost as light, she left her native land, South Wales, intent on the idea of becoming a Mrs. Siddons, a Mrs. Jordan, or a Miss Farren.

As there was some difficulty in escaping without observation, a late hour was chosen for that purpose ; and accordingly, at six o’clock on a most dreary evening in the commencement of January, and during a most severe frost, this hopeful expedition commenced. Pending a journey, by night, of seventy miles,—full of dangers, and difficulties, in consequence of the frozen surface of the road, resembling one continuous sheet of glass,—the necessity of perpetually alighting from the carriage to ascend, and descend steep hills, and the excessive external cold, seemed mere pastime to a young lady consumed internally by the flames of theatrical ambition.

At every inn where she stopped, curiosity was on tiptoe ; nor was it long excited in vain ; for, when once fairly out of the reach of opposition, and pursuit, she gloried too much in her intentions, to permit them to continue in obscurity : and at the inn, where she rested the first night, there was not a creature attached to it, from the half civilized Welsh landlord, down to the half human Welsh ostler, that did not indulge themselves in a stare at the young lady, who, according to their own phrase, “*was going to be Mrs. Siddons, if you please.*”

On the evening of the following day, she reached Bristol ; where she was most kindly received by a female friend, who afterwards accompanied her to London : when, with all possible despatch, she wrote to Mr. Lewis, the acting manager of

Covent Garden Theatre, requesting an interview. This gentleman, with his usual politeness, waited on her immediately, and appointed the following morning for the trial of her qualifications.

Here was happiness almost too great for belief ; the principal fear was, that the morrow would never arrive : however, as may be supposed, it *did* arrive, and she departed for the theatre, perhaps, the very happiest creature in existence. Accustomed to good society, she possessed that ease of manner, and conversation, which habit and observation can alone accord ; therefore, when met, and politely received by the managers, she manifested neither the slightest awkwardness, nor *mauvaise honte*, during her recitation of several fragments from different plays. Mr. Lewis encouragingly expressed his approbation of her attempts, and *Sophia*, in the *Road to Ruin*, was selected for her first appearance.—That her success on her *début* was complete, is evident from the newspapers having unanimously pronounced a favourable verdict.

Mr. Harris informed her, that he had been so well satisfied with her performance, and her reception, he should repeat the play on the following evening. Wholly ignorant of the arrangements of a theatre, and that the above proposition, was the most evident and satisfactory proof of her success, and with no more awe for that important personage, a manager, than for any other individual, this unsophisticated and thoughtless young lady coolly replied,

“ That she did not like the part, and should therefore, infinitely prefer another.”

Mr. Harris, wholly unused to this independent style, coldly answered, that as these were the young lady’s feelings, she must wait for a convenient opportunity ; and then, making her a distant bow, he left the room.

She felt that she had given offence, but could not imagine the cause ; until it was afterwards explained to her. She then saw her error, but knew not how to remedy it : and week after week passed away, but no second appearance was proposed. From that moment, a re-action of her own feelings ensued, which, conjoined with my constant attempts to dissuade her, from her difficult and dangerous profession, soon abated her stage mania, and in a few more months, it entirely vanished.

Her *naïve* manner, and uncommon ingenuousness, gained her the good will of all who surrounded her ; and for my own part, the very first time I saw her, I had a sort of presentiment, that “*my time was come.*” At the period to which I now allude, it did really come : and the *ides* of March were selected for the consummation of this grand event.

My brother Richard, having also, at this period, manifested matrimonial tendencies, our old Temple Chamber establishment,—where, he, and I, and old Nurse Morgan, had, during fifteen years, domesticated together, so cordially, and comfortably,—was now about to be abandoned, and exchanged for new partners, new habitations, and new scenes.

As the awful period approached, the old proverb of “*Look before you leap,*” constantly obtruded itself on both my brother and me, and filled us with a thousand idle dreams, and vague anticipations of misfortune. On the day, that he, and I, went together to Doctors’ Commons, for our two licenses, the proctor’s clerk, mistaking me for some other client, to my question whether every thing was arranged, pertly replied,

“*Call again at the end of the long vacation, and then, you will be sure of your divorce.*”—“*A divorce!*” I exclaimed.

“*Certainly,*” he continued, “*by that time, we shall have plenty of evidence to prove your wife’s indiscretions !*”

“*The d——l you will,*” I rejoined, in much astonishment at this awful communication, and was proceeding, when the proctor arriving, terminated an equivoque, that ought to have made us laugh ; but which, in fact, only excited fresh doubts, and fears, relative to the plunge we were about to make : for, Dick was a believer in presages, and thought with Cicero, “*Multa Oraculis declarantur, multa vaticinationibus, multa somniis, multa portentis.*”

However, the die had been thrown, and it was too late for retreat ; so, after having adjusted this first grand matrimonial ceremony, we walked home, almost dumb with doubt, hope, apprehension and joy ; for, the little god of love, *war*, *money*, and all life’s grand *machinery*, contrived to be so extremely busy, and so determined to conquer, that, to quote from a *certain* great poet,

“*He bluster’d, flutter’d, stamp’d the ground,
And kick’d a little dust around.*”

That day therefore, we dined together for the last time as bachelors : our old faithful companion, our second mother, vainly endeavouring to conceal her grief, which had no selfish origin in any fears relative to her own future situation, but wholly arose from her extreme anxiety for our welfare.

My brother's intended wife was the widow of the late Mr. North,* of Thurland Castle, a rich gentleman of Westmoreland ; a lady, whom from the first moment I saw her, down to the present hour, I have always found of so lively, and cheerful a disposition that (like Topham) she is one of the few who can boast of leaving her friends more content, and in better humour with themselves, than when she joined them.

Richard's wedding being appointed to take place on the Friday, and mine not till Saturday, on my return to chambers on the Thursday evening, I was much surprised at receiving the following message from him, through old nurse—

“ Your brother desires me to say, that if you will put off *your* marriage, he will put off *his*. ”

Sudden and abrupt conclusion ; however that this was a mere temporary panic, is evident, as he was united to this very agreeable widow on the following morning at St. Pancras, and after the ceremony, having started for his wife's seat in the North, he wrote me a short note, in which he concluded, asserting “ that he was one of the happiest fellows living. ”

So was not I ; my brother had passed his trial, but mine was yet to be endured. Still, however, love's wings kept me buoyant, and having arranged with our faithful domestic, that she should end her “ chair days ” by my fire-side, I lay down somewhat more composed, and slept soundly till eight o'clock the following morning ; when, I was awakened by the sudden opening of my bed room door, and the loud, deep tone of my future brother-in-law Mr. Mansel, exclaiming,

“ Master Barnardine, you must rise and be hanged, Master Barnardine.”

“ *Obstupi, steteruntque comes, et vox fauibus hæsit.* ”

When, observing my alarm, and astonishment, and making

* His son, the present Mr. North, has so enlarged, and improved this ancient edifice, that Thurland Castle, from its fine terrace, beautiful grounds, and picturesque character of its surrounding scenery, may probably be considered as one of the most magnificent seats in the north.

due allowances for the importance of the cause, my disturber softened his voice, and whispered,

“ Virgin awake! thy marriage hour is nigh.”

The ceremony being concluded, we repaired to our new habitation, not in an equipage displaying those tantalizing disturbers to the peace of spinsters—those broad divulgers of family secrets,—bold, *white favours!*—no—we returned in private: and on our arrival, found our female Major Domo (old nurse) had prepared every thing for our reception—even dinner—but unluckily, when put on the table, the meat not being sufficiently roasted, we were obliged (most awfully *ominous!*) to commence with—a *broil*.

Whether this *dish* was repeated during the *honeymoon*, matrimonial etiquette forbids me to mention—so, down drops the curtain, but with what share of applause, I leave others to determine.

CHAPTER. XVII.

CHANGE OF SCENE, AND ODDS AND ENDS.

“ Now, Sir, as I have been making my way for nearly forty years through a crowd of cares, of all which, through the favour of Providence I have at length got rid, is it now a time of day to leave off my fooleries, and set up a new character?”

COLLEY CIBBER.

THOUGH Benedict did not prove the very formidable character, that my imagination had pictured him, still I could not exactly reconcile myself to the violent and sudden change in my usual mode of life. At chambers I lived free as air; but, now, I was compelled to be constantly on my good behaviour; and yet, each succeeding day produced some fresh cause for confusion. For instance,—such was the *curiosity* to see the newly married couple, that numbers of acquaintances, supposed to have been long since dead, came to life; and thronging to the *show* in crowds, so completely occupied every nook of our small apartments, that, during the first fortnight after our marriage, and during a most violent frost, though by chance I

sometimes got a sight of the bride, I could never get a peep at the fire,—

“ *PROBITAS laudatur, et alget;*”
I was flattered, and frozen.

But, more grievances must yet be added. No longer now, could I indulge in my independent style of lolling on one chair, with my feet on another; of coming home late to dinner, or of not coming home, at all; nor, of lounging till after midnight, at the theatres, coffee-houses, and assemblies; and last, not least, must be conjoined the grand decided change,—*Exit as buyer, of stock, and enter as seller.*

Yet, notwithstanding these alloys, increasing love, pride in the object, and sympathetic feelings so predominated, that I, who used to say, “ There ought to be a tax on bachelors, because it was a *luxury*,” now owned that when I had been thus cynical,

“ I did not think I should live to be married.”

Shortly afterwards the arrival in town of my wife’s maternal uncle, Colonel Landeg, from his seat of Brinwillach, in Glamorganshire, tended still further to incline my wavering opinions towards the more substantial comforts of matrimony. This gentleman, (though a reserved, yet, a most courteous, and soldier-like character,) had continued so angry with his niece, during the whole of her short theatrical career, that he had never corresponded, nor in any other way ever had the slightest communication with her: but, the moment that he heard, she had quitted the stage, his resentment vanished, and all his former fondness returning, he hastened to London, to have the pleasure of personally congratulating her on her marriage.

But, would not this gentleman’s aversion from the stage have been diminished had he lived longer? It is true that he had heard of Charles the Second, creating Nell Gwynn, Dutchess of Cleveland, of the Duke of Bolton’s marriage with Miss Fenton, and of the Earl of Derby’s with the amiable, and elegant Miss Farren. But he died before the unions of the Reverend Mr. Murray and Miss Gayton; of Robert Heathcote, and Miss Serle; of Mr. Coutts, and Miss Mellon; of Lord Thurlow, and Miss Bolton; of Lord Craven, and Miss Brunton; of Mr. Becher, and Miss O’Neil, and so many other high dramatic Benedictics, that

possibly within the course of a century, the two houses of parliament will be emancipated from the heavy dominion of lawyers, and their descendants, and submit to the direction of the more lively issue of actresses.*

We passed the summer at the Colonel's residence, Brinwillach, near Swansea; where, we met my wife's sister, now married to Mr. Mortimer, one of the most leading medical gentlemen in Bristol. The situation of the house was very *mediocre*; but, the surrounding country was beautifully wild and romantic. Here, as in Ireland, I had nearly become the victim of hearty hospitality; for, after ruralizing there above six weeks, my mind, as on former country excursions, became so enervated, (I should say *weaker* than *usual*,) that when that friendly, enlightened, and *récherche* gentleman, Henry Luttrell, accidentally paid us a visit, and during the course of conversation, used the words "paradoxical," and "enigmatical," I stared at him with awe and surprise, considering him as a phenomenon in philology, and erudition.

During the six Arcadian weeks, which I passed amongst these Welsh mountains, I gleaned little worth remembering. Certainly I might state, that the Colonel, as magistrate, banker, and leader of the volunteer corps, was a very useful personage in the country;—that he was also, a rich gentleman farmer, and that, like my father, he lost largely by his hobby: for, owing to the low situation of his farm, hay, which had been cocked in the meadows, and intended to be carried the following day, rode triumphantly on one of the torrents (which descended from the mountains after a storm,) into the British Channel, and thence, by the shortest conveyance, into the Atlantic Ocean.

I might also state, that one of the Colonel's hounds used occasionally to amuse himself, by jumping through the large panes of a window, opening to the garden, and that he would then repair to the sofa, and there stretch, and sleep, as if nothing unusual had occurred:—that, my kind host kept hunters, bevies of maid servants, three bulls, and a parrot, who usually got

* The following peers have all owed their peerages to the profession of the law; Lords Camden, Northington, Walsingham, Alvanley, Thurlow, Kenyon, Rosslyn, Ashburton, Erskine, Ellenborough, Mansfield, Grantley, Onslow, Bathurst, Ponsonby, Eldon, Gifford:—"Cum multis aliis quo nunc prescribere longum est."

through the *ennui* of his day, by ridiculing and tormenting a poor unfortunate Dutch poodle; and that, another odd inhabitant of this rural abode was a very large tame raven, who lying in ambush among the tops of high trees, used to drop on the head of the first horseman that passed; when the poor superstitious Taffy, panic-struck, (without daring to look up) galloped off full speed, surmounted by his black adversary; thus exemplifying the proverb, “ *He needs must go, the devil drives.*”

After our departure from this hospitable and “ motley coloured” abode, for London, and “ its dear delights,”* passing through Swansea on our return, we stopped for a few days, on a visit to some friends in that town. Amongst the other Liens, I did not forget to include the theatre; and, as “ a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,” was deeply wounded to find the benches almost deserted. But my sympathy was considerably increased by the heart-rending story of the unhappy manager; who tearfully related, that of late years, the increase of sectarianism had caused so rapid a decrease in the value of theatrical property throughout the whole principality, that, unless the sectaries exchanged their system of persecution for toleration, all the theatres must be closed, or opened only as *meeting houses*.

The stage, at this period, and in this part of the country, was not only openly attacked in all their publications, but from their pulpits. One of these *tolerating* worthies, amongst other liberal allusions to the drama, introduced the following veracious anecdote as from Tertullian—

“ A certain woman went to a play-house, and brought the devil home with her. And when the unclean spirit was stoutly pressed by the *exorcist* as to his reasons for daring to attack a Christian, he boldly replied, “ I have done nothing but what I could justify, for I seized her upon *my own ground*.”

Another of these *intellectualists*, imitating the example of him mentioned in Tate Wilkinson’s *Wandering Patentee*, thus, at once, settled the whole of the theatrical tribe—

* I remember that the late Duke of Bedford used to say, that he believed Woburn was usually considered as one of the finest seats in England; and yet, such was the monotony of a country house, and such the charm of London society, that he could scarcely ever get any body but *dull toading, tuft-hunters*, to remain there above four days successively.

“ No player, nor any of his children, ought to be entitled to a Christian burial, but should be excluded from church-yards in *toto*. Not one of them can be saved! Nay, more, even they who go to see plays are equally doomed to perdition; not to common qualified suffering, but to perdition in *toto*.”

Perfectly conclusive—a most decided verdict. But who is this gentleman, that so cleverly performs the parts of counsel, judge and jury? One, who on entering a town, in a full suit of black, with polished boots, hair straitly combed, and seated on a smooth trotting horse, as highly fed as its rider, proceeds importantly to the place of his destination; where his host receives him with more humility, respect and attention, than a Franciscan friar would pay to a Cardinal. He is afterwards conducted to the best chamber, regales on the choicest viands, drinks the rarest wines, sleeps on the softest bed, and, on the following morning, repairs to *his* theatre to laud temperance and condemn luxury; and whether bad or good actor, whether absurd or skilful author, equally secure, not only of no *hissing*, but of the *sighing* approbation of the whole of his brotherly audience.

Such is the life of this wholesale dealer in anathemas: while the poor persecuted itinerant player, the humble reciter of Shakspeare’s ethics, lodges in a garret, regales on cold mutton, drinks small beer, and sleeps on a bed of straw, or perhaps, on no bed at all. This is the life which one of these country actors once described to me; and, he added, that he had frequently performed *Lord Foppington*, *Doricourt*, and other fine gentlemen, with nothing of a shirt except the semblance round his neck,—a collar; and that he durst never approach the sea-shore, lest its invigorating breezes should give an insupportable increase to his appetite. Yet, this actor lived to triumph over the fulminations of these intolerant enthusiasts, and all other difficulties, and now lives in the possession of a fine fortune, gained by the practice of a profession, which tends perhaps, more than any other, “ to show virtue her own feature, and scorn her own image.”

I am sorry to add, that the stage has also been publicly attacked, even by members of the established church. Amongst other random accusations made against the theatrical profession, the dramatists of former periods have been denounced as

the cause of corrupting the morals of thousands of unsophisticated persons of both sexes, and whilst poor Congreve, Vanbrugh and Wycherly are said to be suffering in purgatory, Killigrew, Davenant, and other Charles the Second wits, are supposed to be enduring more decided punishment.

Yet, during the long reign of the “Merry Monarch,” only *two cases of divorce* are recorded; whilst *now*, heaven help us, Crim. Con. and seduction cases have become “plentiful as blackberries.”

But the severest censor can not, I am sure, attach the smallest portion of the present immorality to the stage representations of the present day; a day when if the comedies of Congreve and Vanbrugh be acted at all, they must be acted almost without their dialogue. Who then is *now* in fault? Certainly not *modern dramatists*. I leave, therefore, the discovery of the real sinners to the *modern saints*.

On my arrival in London, my ninth comedy, called *Management*, was put into rehearsal immediately: and marriage rendering its success of far greater importance to me, than had hitherto been any of my previous comedies, my usual anxiety was proportionately increased. Had it failed, our fate would have been to repair to a cottage, or to “wakes, and fairs, and market towns.” Indeed, during the course of these rehearsals, we had some fearful hints that such an event was not impossible, owing to the threatening appearance which the rebellion of the “*glorious eight*,” (as Mr. Moody humorously called them) assumed.*

However, cautiously steering between manager and actor, I offended neither, and both, therefore, gave me their aid *con amore*. Munden in particular rendered me the most effectual service in a part called *Worry*, though, at first, such were his doubts as to his success, that I remember on the first night he

* The names of these actors were Holman, Pope, Munden, J. Johnstone, Incledon, Fawcet, H. Johnstone, and Knight. The cause assigned for their complaints was, the alleged exorbitancy of the fine of thirty pounds for refusing a character, and the charge on a benefit night of one hundred and sixty pounds, instead of the previous charge of one hundred and forty pounds. The quarrel continued, and, at length, hostilities were so formidable an aspect, that by the mutual agreement of both parties, the disputed points were submitted to Lord Salisbury, then Lord Chamberlain, for decision. This nobleman, after a careful inspection, awarded in favour of Mr. Harris.

whispered to me at the wing, just as he was going on the stage—

“Here I go, Mr. Author, heads or tails.”

But his success in this, as in other instances, did not arise from luck, but from judgment. Colman also contributed his powerful aid, by writing an excellent epilogue, spoken in character by Mist, the manager. The following were amongst the most effective lines:—

“ My country playhouse, e'er I came to town,
Almost knocked up, has been in lots knock'd down;
A sturdy farmer bought the walls—what then?
What was a barn, will be a barn again—
Corn on the stage, not mummers will be seen,
And oats be *thresh'd*, where actors should have been.”

From this time forth I again frequented theatres, attended clubs, and mixed in society as heretofore. Not that for one moment I forgot I was married—no—there my reminiscences were always on the alert. Walking one day in St. James's Park, with a member of the Keep the Line Club, who, for the first time, had just been returned to a seat in parliament, we met Mr. Pitt, as he was leaving the Treasury; my companion thus familiarly accosted him.

“How do you do, Mr. Pitt?”

The Minister, evidently having either no knowledge, or no recollection of him, erected his person, and made no answer. But my new M.P., not in the least abashed, thus continued—

“I suppose you know I am returned for the independent borough of _____?”

“Indeed!” replied Mr. Pitt, with much *non-chalance*.

“Yes,” rejoined my friend, “I am, Sir; and, as I always speak my mind, I beg you to understand, that, though I mean to support you on most occasions, I shall vote against you on the Catholic question.”

“Sir,” replied the minister coldly, as he mounted his horse, “you may vote on that occasion, and on all others, as you may think most proper.”

I leave my readers to determine which gentleman conducted himself, according to Windham's phrase, most in “the independent line,” the Member or the Minister?

Miles Peter Andrews, shortly previous to the period of

which I am now treating, had now taken a large mansion in the Green Park; that which had been occupied by Lord Grenville, till he resigned his situation in the cabinet. Though rats run from falling houses, yet, as they and other animals, rally in multitudes round rising houses, Andrews and his establishment became so much the fashion, that I doubt whether his grand gala nights did not equal those given by any rival noble “transcendent,” of the present day; ay, even though they were the *super-transcendents* of Piccadilly and St. James’s-square.

Dining with Mr. Pitt, at this same splendid and hospitable mansion, for the first time since our boyish interview at Hayes, our host, Andrews, with a view of entertaining the great statesman, made me recapitulate the whole story of the *Pompadour pony*. Pitt laughed very heartily, and acknowledged that he had some recollection of this school-boy circumstance; but he totally denied the truth of another, stated to have happened about the same period, viz.—that during a juvenile quarrel, his elder brother had said—

“When my father dies, Sir, do you know who I shall be?”

“Why, the Earl of Chatham,” was the little future minister’s reply, and he then added—

“But do you know who *I* shall be?—*William Pitt*—a far more respectable character;”—in allusion to his father’s acceptance of the peerage. Pitt still denied the truth of this anecdote.

Andrews always pursued one very happy plan in the arrangement of his parties, never inviting to the same dinner persons whose conversation, from their opposing politics, or from their different situations in life, might probably clash, and lead to argument and discussion.

For instance, he would never have selected me to meet a party of great bankers, merchants, or divines. Such an unfortunate anomaly, however, did occur. Arriving at his house one day at the usual dinner hour, when (as may be supposed) I imagined that I had been invited, Andrews, on my appearance, expressed much astonishment, indeed terror. He briskly asserted that I had made a mistake, and that my invitation was for another day, for, on the present one, he expected the *Million Club*; and it was perfectly absurd to suppose that he could have selected me to meet such men as the two Mr. Gold-

smids, Mr. Devaynes, Sir Francis Bering, Mr. Angerstein, and the two Mr. Hopes.

“ For,” he added, “ you are not a safe person, my dear friend; you have no discretion; and one of your broad stories, might cut me out of my usual slices of the loan, directorships, contracts, *et extera*, my dear Sir!”

Convinced he was right, I offered to retire; but he, from hospitality and good will, loath that an old friend should depart *dinnerless*, immediately altered his tone, and insisted that I should remain; simply requesting me to promise, that I would rather be an auditor, than an actor, in the evening’s entertainment, and that, above all things, I would be most careful never to venture a hazardous joke.

At length, *Peru*, *Mexico*, *Golconda*, the *India House*, the *Bank of England*, *Amsterdam*, and *Rotterdam*, arrived. Two others of the *Million Club*, also accompanied them, and never before stood I in such presence!

The dinner, wines, and the whole arrangements, were, as on the previous occasions, admirable. Nothing was wanting to complete the conviviality of the scene, but, *conviviality*. All was solemn silence, except when now and then, a word or two escaped relative to that most unintelligible of all questions, the Bullion question, and when Andrews, who laboured most assiduously to counteract *Mammon’s weight*, told story after story without the slightest success. Never shall I forget his melancholy side looks at me, expressing his conviction, that if the day failed, he himself might probably fail.

Seeing more and more, how very anxious he was to afford entertainment to these sons of Plutus, and imagining that I could not make matters worse, I fired a shot, which completely missing, and Andrews shaking his head, and becoming more restless, I grew desperate and *apropos to nothing*, went off at score, with a broad story of our host himself, relative (amongst other annoyances) to his bathing at Scarborough; when, mistaking Lady L——’s machine for his own, and taking possession, the dowager on her arrival, ejected him at the back door; and before the usual *quantum* of morning spectators, he was compelled to skip to shore in “ *puris naturalibus* ”.

This story, probably from its whimsical allusion to the master of the house, was completely successful—it was not cari-

are to even one of the *million*. Accordingly, Andrews, who if he had been a common host, would have been violently offended, by the breadth and personality of the anecdote, was instead, so much delighted to see his party delighted, that he not only heartily joined in the roar, but exclaimed,

“Tell another of me, my dear Reynolds, that, of the bean sack and the terrier.”

I obeyed, and told another and another, with equal success; Andrews encouraging and cheering me the whole time, though each story was more and more at his expense. At length the day terminating in this manner, the elder Mr. Goldsmid took me home with him in his carriage, solely for the purpose of hearing other anecdotes relative to the same popular subject.

Meeting Andrews the following day, I found him in high spirits at the success of his party, and he heartily thanked me for the effects I had produced; when I was equally thankful to him as the cause of those effects. This anecdote, I trust, will among others tend to show, that by his originality, his hospitality and his total want of vanity, Andrews was indeed, “in himself a *host*.”

Probably, however, the most pleasant days I passed at this house were those on which Andrews received his intimate friends “*en famille*.”—These unceremonious, satisfactory little parties, generally consisted of Sir Henry Bate Dudley, Sir Frederick Eden, Sir Walter Stirling, Archdeacon Carver, Wilson Roberts, Charles Wilsonne, Topham, Fitzgerald, Morton, and Andrews’s nearest relatives, Frederick and Robert Pigou.

Some time previously to the merry Million Club meeting, two circumstances occurred, that, considered conjointly, wore a very alarming aspect. During a review in Hyde Park, a ball struck a clerk in the Navy Office, Mr. Ongley, who was standing only a few yards from his Majesty. An examination of the cartouche boxes ensued, but no soldier could be selected as the individual who had fired the shot.

On the same evening, his Majesty having commanded a play at Drury Lane theatre, curiosity impelling me to witness his reception, I arrived at the house before the curtain rose. On the King’s entering the stage box, a shot was fired at him by Hatfield, and—here my reminiscences check, instead of

aiding me, for they remind me, that this, is a *hundred times told tale*, and therefore,—though I should have delighted to dwell on the intrepidity of his Majesty, and on the noble calmness with which he advanced and bowed to the audience, and with which he directed the Queen and Princesses to await the conclusion of the evening's entertainments,—this pleasure I must abandon, rather than risk being accused of giving “*ditto repeated*,” for the hundredth and *first* time.

I might also recur to Miss Farren's farewell to the stage, in the character of Lady Teazle; to Mr. Smith's return to it for only one single night, and after ten years retirement, to perform *Charles Surface*, for his friend, Tom King's benefit; to Mr. Cooke's successful first appearance in *Richard the Third*; and to my friend Lewis's purchase of a sixth share of Covent Garden Theatre, from Mr. Harris, at the price of twenty-three thousand pounds: but, as these matters have been both frequently and ably treated, I deem it the wiser plan to leave them where I found them.

Yet, there is one rich comedian, who died a few years before this period, to whose memory and talents I can not resist the pleasure of devoting a few lines,—Parsons. All who remember Mrs. Siddons, the *fixed*, never the *falling*, “star” of her day, must also recollect her original, powerful and impressive mode of delivering certain brief passages, such as in *Venice Preserved*, “Was it a miserable day?” In the *Mourning Bride*, “No—not the Princess's self;” and in *Henry the Eighth*, “To you, Lord Cardinal, to you, I speak.” So, though in an inferior walk of the drama, none who ever saw Parsons in *Volpone*, in *The Confederacy*, and in *The Village Lawyer*, can forget his effective mode of exclaiming, while representing the character of the avaricious *Corbaccio*,

“Has he made his will?
What has he given me?”

MOSCHA.—No, Sir—

CORBACCIO.—Nothing!—ha!”

And again, as the amorous old *Moneytrap*,

“Eh?—how long will it be, Flippanta?”

And lastly, as the roguish *Sheepface*, when consulting the lawyer, *Scout*,

“Let's try it t'other way.”

His rivals, Edwin and Quick, undoubtedly possessed one great advantage over him, that of singing! Yet despite of this powerful aid to his competitors, Parsons, relying more on mental, than on vocal talents, maintained his ground, and for year after year, the original *Sir Fretful Plagiary* and *Crab-tree*, continued to make successful play against the original *Lingo* and *Peeping Tom*, and what is still more to Parsons' credit, against the original *Tony Lumpkin* and *Isaac*.

Of another comic favourite, who entered the list with this celebrated trio, and nobly supported the fight, I have before spoken—to Bannister, junior, I allude. But I must not forget here to add, that he possessed what “they upon the adverse faction” wanted, strong serio-comic power; and that his personation of the character of a sailor, was certainly superior to that of any other actor on the stage. I do not allude to our modern *trap-clapping* sailors; impostors in a blue jacket and trowsers, who vociferate a certain number of slang nautical phrases, who with their elbows bang their tobacco boxes, put quids in their mouths, pull up their trowsers, and boasting of “*Britannia's wooden walls*,” and *Albion's matchless glory*,” swagger up to the lamps exclaiming, “*There's a sailor for you!*” though every rational Englishman, ashamed of this libel on his countrymen, involuntarily retorts, “*There's a brute for you!*”

No, I allude to the genuine *Jack Tar*, particularly to Congreve's *Ben*, that creature of humour, candour, courage and carelessness; who is neither a tobacco taker, nor a *Britannia boaster*: in that legitimate sailor, Bannister was inimitable. Indeed, the love scene between him and *Miss Prue*, when this latter part was acted by Mrs. Jordan, was probably never surpassed in rich natural comedy.—Of Bannister, junior, also, it should be remembered, that, in giving his imitations, and *opening his Budget*, no man was more completely “*at home*.”

During the month of June, I finished my eleventh comedy, called *Life*; but after it was fairly copied, and on the point of being sent to the manager, I became so dissatisfied with the hero, a character called *Makeplot*, in opposition to *Murplot*, that to prevent his being dismissed in the theatre, I dismissed him from the manuscript, and introduced as his substitute, a part called *Sir Harry Torpid*. I mention this trifling cir-

circumstance, in order that others may, if they choose, profit by it, and instead of being blinded by vanity and elated by flattery, let them open their eyes to their own errors, and not consider themselves “*Sir Oracle*,” until at least, another oracle had decided on their pretensions: diffidence and industry can alone secure them the main object of their exertions, —laughter at their comedies; while indolence and vain glory will inevitably ensure them laughter at—the author.

Now that we are on the subject of conceit, I must not forget to mention the following epigram, written a few years since, on a strutting actor, who was nick-named, by his brother comedians, “*Sir Bantam*,”

“ Would you grow wealthy in a trice,
And rule with gold the town;
Buy Bantam, at his *real* price,
And sell him at *his own*.”

During the rehearsal of this comedy, nothing worthy of narration occurred, excepting that one morning, the performer who was to represent the serious hero, took me aside, and with much agitation, urgently requested me to speak to Mr. Harris, relative to the conduct of the carpenters on the previous evening. This useful actor was constantly in the habit of performing *Henry the Sixth*, and being subject to all the weakness and tremors, attendant on a derangement of the nerves, he nightly bribed the carpenters to raise him up the trap, in the ghost scene, with particular gentleness and caution. This arrangement continued, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, until the previous night; when, the cunning rogues increasing their pecuniary demands, and he resolutely resisting them, they in revenge, raised the trap with such rapidity, that the *Royal Spectre* shot upwards into the air above a foot, and on returning to *terra firma*, gave such evident and noisy proofs of his corporeity, that an instantaneous burst of laughter from all parts of the house, paid a just tribute to the comic inimitability of his involuntary agility.

Life was produced early in November, 1800, and was so well received, that it soon reached the twentieth night, and, consequently, produced to the author the old sum. Lewis, by a striking display of serio-comic talent, in act second, proved, that at his pleasure he could excite tears as abundantly as

smiles. The epilogue, written by the late James Cobb, Secretary to the East India Company, was admirably delivered by Munden, in the character of *Primitive*. The following lines, alluding to the late republican style of dress, and the equality between master and man, may probably not be deemed unworthy of repetition—

“ ‘Twas but last week, as travelling to town,
Meaning to give the post-boy half-a-crown,
The inn being full, all riot, noise and bother,
And really one shock head’s so like another,
That chancing near Lord Dashaway to stand,
I popp’d my half-crown in his Lordship’s hand.”

On the night that the King commanded this comedy, he asked Mr. Harris whether it were true that Cooke intended to perform the *Prince of Denmark*? The manager replying in the affirmative, his Majesty hastened away, observing—

“ Wont do, wont do. Lord Thurlow might as well play *Hamlet*.”

The King was right, and the *Prince* failed *in toto*.

When Cooke once performed this part, in Ireland, he sharpened his sword in the green-room, saying, “ I and Mr. Laertes will, to night, in reality, settle our little disputes,” which alarming threat reaching the menaced actor’s ears, (through his alarmed *chère amie*,) at the commencement of the fencing match, the son of *Polonius*, seizing *Hamlet* with both hands by the collar, threw him on his back, and triumphantly put his knee on him.

Life was afterwards performed by special desire of Lord Nelson, at that time called the Hero of the Nile. Sir William and Lady Hamilton accompanied him and his party, and the house (as it ought to have been) was crowded to excess.

After the conclusion of the play, his Lordship came behind the scenes, and there engaged in cheerful conversation with several of the different persons whom curiosity had collected. Every body anxiously questioning him on some point relative to the then late battle, Lewis inquired whether it were true that his Lordship overheard, before the commencement of the fight, a sailor fervently praying that “ Heaven might be pleased to distribute the shot *like the prize money?*” Lord Nelson

replied in the affirmative, and then asked Lewis if it were true that the *same sailor* (for, from time immemorial, he said, *one* Jack Tar had cut *all* the *nautical jokes*,) having on the first rush at the opening of the doors at this theatre, (a year before) fallen from the upper gallery into the pit, had coolly demanded for his *performance* the freedom of the theatre. "Yes," answered Lewis; "and after keeping possession of the seat where he had perched, and comfortably sitting out the play, he demanded the *return of his shilling* into the bargain."

I can not resist mentioning here another anecdote, (afterwards told me) of Lord Nelson, and, I presume, of the *same sailor*. This humorous Jack Tar having, at the siege of Bastia and during the dead of the night, *secretly* scaled one of the enemy's forts, speedily returned undiscovered, bringing away with him the Corsican flag, and facetiously leaving behind him that of England in its place. The following morning, the confusion that this sight created among both the besieged and the besiegers was inconceivable, and, for a time, remained inexplicable; but the gallant tar, with all his *bravery*, not being free from vanity, revealed his secret, and the story reaching his Lordship's ears, he was involuntarily compelled to reprimand him publicly, and threatened him with *dismissal*; to which honest Jack hastily replied—

"Very well, Admiral; then *douce my chops*, you *may take the next fort yourself*."

These amusing trifles in dramatic life were succeeded by a grand serious event in *real life*, which compelled me to appear in a new and most formidable character—that of a *father*. A well known barrister, the late Miles Walker Hall, used to say that the filing *a bill in Chancery* was the *firing a cannon*, which would be heard over half the kingdom. So it may be said of the birth of that little bill in Chancery, a *baby*; the clamour which accompanies his entry into court, renders the *harshest sounds of artillery*, or any other harsher sound, comparatively harmonious. Then, the fees of office. Then, the arbitrary jurisdiction of the Vice Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls, (the *accoucheur*, and the *month nurse*); then the degradation of the husband, who, though before, at least, a *Master in Chancery*, is now scarcely one of the *sixty clerks*. Then, no long vacation; on the contrary, business the whole year round, and the court opening every day, with the commence-

ment of the morning, and the contest continuing till the conclusion of the evening. Then, the expense of the *defendant*, (the father, annually increasing so long as the *plaintiff*, (the baby) and his suit last, which they *possibly* may for a century.

And yet it may be asked, what is matrimony, unless this necessary equitable transaction be effected? Why, strange as the answer may seem, the wife, feeling the joys of the fire-side incomplete, the husband prefers, as the less evil, with all its cares, confusion and expense, the arrival of this darling of the mother, this hope and pride of grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts, this *riotous little heir at law*, to a continuity of monotonous dissatisfactory *still life*.

That a father's is a very bad part, may be proved amongst other instances, by the affidavit of the Irishman, who swearing the peace against his three sons, thus concluded;—"and this deponent further saith, that the only one of his children who showed him any real filial affection, was his youngest son Lary, for he never struck him when he was down."

During the summer, we took part of a farm house at Chiselhurst, in Kent, and thither we travelled; with two additional companions, the *plaintiff* and his *nurse*. This additional accession to my expenses, rendering it necessary that even "Sunday should shine no holiday for me," I immediately commenced planning another comedy, and laboured so regularly and so intensely, that one day, while according to my usual habits, I was walking up and down the garden, kicking about the gravel, and beating my forehead, in the vain hope of thence eliciting a comic thought, I overheard the farmer's wife, who had been most anxiously watching me, say in an under tone to her husband—

"John, what a brute you are; why do you not go and help the poor gentleman?"

John, however, really did help me, though unconsciously; for, I found for him a niche in the comedy: and the consequent result was, that I received from my landlord much more than I paid him. This, I trust, will prove another hint for young dramatists.

This present rural scene was to me, like all other rural scenes, tame and monotonous; perhaps I even considered it with an additional prejudice, for, I was hourly required to attend to the conflicting interests of my *dramatic* child, and my *real* child;

neither of which, on this occasion, I could manage to *handle* with success.

Our only visiter from London was the late Charles Moore, son of Doctor Moore, (author of *Zeluco*,) and brother of the General, and Admiral of that name. He was not only a fellow of "most excellent fancy," but, a most consistent and warm-hearted friend. One evening, after we had visited the aforesaid *plaintiff* in the nursery, inquiring my friend's opinions relative to that important place, he replied, that he could not agree with an old author (he believed Grotius) who had stated that without children, "marriage and celibacy are synonymous." During our important debate on this point, a country gentleman and his wife came by invitation to drink tea, and in point of ugliness, I may again state (as in the case of Wilkes and his *chère amie*)—

"Ah, sure a pair was never seen!"

After their departure, Charles Moore inquired of us, whether the happy pair had any children? we replying in the negative, he rejoined—

"I thought not; Grotius is right there. *Monsters never breed.*"

Yet our ugly country squire was not wholly unentertaining; as, during the early part of his life, having been attached to the household of George the Second, he abounded in anecdotes relative to his reign. As one of the band of gentlemen pensioners, he frequently attended his Majesty to the theatre, and, consequently, more than once witnessed the representation of Ravenscroft's famous *London Cuckolds*, a comedy to which his Majesty is said to have been extremely partial. From what cause, is now scarcely imaginable, as,—excepting the scene where *Peggy*, caparisoned in a full suit of armour, during the absence of her husband, watches his nightcap, and where *Doodle* compels his wife, *Arabella*, to answer nothing but "No!" to all questions during his absence,—the play is (in my humble opinion) a series not only of gross plagiarisms, but of low, dull intrigue. However, like many other bad comedies, (I speak from *experience*,) this comedy was very popular.

On one of the evenings of its representation, by royal command, our visiter told us, that, as his Majesty and suite were proceeding to the theatre, one of the footmen behind the royal

carriage held his lighted flambeau in such a position that the burning wax and tow frequently dropped on the splendid regimentals and caparisons of a cavalry officer, who formed one of the guard of honour on this occasion. He remonstrated and threatened in vain; the knight of the shoulder-knot continued with apparent wilfulness to pour the molton mass on his uniform. At last, entirely losing his temper, and rendered by rage forgetful of his situation, our son of Mars so forcibly and so repeatedly struck the waggish torch-bearer with the flat part of his bare sabre, that a loud cry of *murder* proceeded from the delinquent, and of "stop the carriage," from the consequently alarmed attendants.

The coachman, panic-struck, immediately drew up, and George the Second thrusting his head out of the window, vehemently exclaimed in his own peculiar language, half German, half English,

"*Donder, Vat is dat matter?*"

The officer explained, the footman apologized, both parties were reprimanded, and then the cavalcade proceeded; but, owing to this delay, his Majesty arriving at the theatre some few minutes after his time, the arbitrary audience, (who will rarely allow even a regal actor to keep the stage business waiting,) received him with some very hasty rude marks of their disapprobation. The King, taken by surprise, for a moment expressed both chagrin and embarrassment; but, with a prompt recollection, he skilfully converted all their anger into applause. He drew forth his watch, and having pointed to the hand, and shown it to the lord-in-waiting, he advanced to the front of the box, and directing the attention of the audience to his proceedings, he deliberately beat the misleading timekeeper against the box—thus, proving he was a great actor and deserving of the full houses he always brought.

The play commenced, and concluded with its usual success; and no other unusual circumstance occurred until the middle of the after-piece, where a *Centaur* was introduced; who having to draw a bow, and therewith shoot a formidable adversary, through some confusion, erring in his aim, the arrow entered the royal box and grazed the person of the King. The audience rose in indignation against the perpetrator of this atrocious attempt, and seemed preparing to revenge the outrage; when, at that moment, the whole *fore part* of the *Centaur*

taur fell on its face among the lamps; in consequence of the carpenter, who played the *posterior*, rushing from his concealment with the most trembling humility, in order to assure his Majesty, and all present, that he was no party in this *treasonable* transaction.

At these words arose, and advanced “the *very head and front* of the offence,” and, likewise endeavouring to exculpate himself, energetically addressed the audience. The noisy discussion, and the ridiculous criminations and vindications which ensued between these two grotesque, half dressed, *half human* beings, so amply rewarded George the Second, and the spectators for the previous alarm, that loud and involuntary shouts of laughter from every part of the house acknowledged that the *Centaur’s head and tail* were incomparably the most amusing performers of the evening.

Soon after our return to town, I presented my twelfth comedy to Mr. Harris; who, on this as on former occasions, suggested some valuable alterations, which, as may be supposed, I immediately adopted; for he was no common critic—when he *opposed*, he *proposed*, and as frequently pointed out the *remedy*, as the *defect*. *Folly as it Flies*, for so this comedy was named, was produced in November 1801; and meeting again with my usual good fortune, I again met with my usual income.*

I gained much by my Chiselhurst host, whom I introduced in this comedy, in the character of a Welchman; but perhaps, I gained even more by the late Mr. Knight’s chaste delineation of a Taffy. Lewis in *Tom Tick*, and Munden in *Post Obit*, were *iterum iterumque* excellent supporters; consequently, notwithstanding the great attraction of Mrs. Billington, who played alternately at each theatre, *Folly as it Flies* brought good houses till the twenty-eighth night, when it was acted to the lowest receipt probably ever seen in Covent Garden Theatre,—fourteen pounds, six shillings and sixpence!—Whose fault was this?—The *peace* again, as Morton said; for it was the night of the grand illumination, on account of the termination of the war with Buonaparte.

* A very clever Epilogue was written for this comedy, by my friend Mr. Serjeant Sellon, and spoken by Munden in the character of *Peter Post Obit*.

To add to other dramatic difficulties, the critics now began to attack me with flaming censures on the mannerism of my style, and on the similarity of my plots and characters. Oh, ho, thought I, with Fielding when, on a first night, he heard one of his scenes hissed, “they have found me out, have they.” Deriving almost the whole of my small income from the theatre, and consequently, being compelled by necessity yearly to produce one comedy, not *stolen* from the French, but *founded* on English character, it is not *wholly* improbable that the above mentioned gentlemen had some grounds for their reproaches; and that these “*annuals*,” of my “*hortus siccus*” were not quite enough varied in matter and manner, to meet the entire approbation of those, who are cursed by the possession of that *foe* to authors,—a good memory.

One of the best criticisms, which I ever heard on this subject, was that of a man in the very humblest ranks of life; a coachman of Wilson, the surgeon. This servant, having gone the previous year to see *Folly as it Flies*, was so much gratified by the performance, that he was permitted to witness the representation of my comedy on the succeeding year,—*Delays and Blunders*. On his return his master asked him, how he had been entertained by the new play?

“Why very well, Sir,” he replied, “only you see they have left out the Welshman this year.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

HITS AND MISSES.

Thyself from flatt'ring *self-conceit* defend,
Nor what thou do'st not know, to know pretend.

DEANHAM.

AT this time my intimacy commenced with the eldest son of Mr. Harris, Mr Henry Harris; a friend, for whom, from his very boyhood, I have felt even a paternal regard. Naturally blessed with a good understanding, improved by a finished education, and possessing temper of that “unclouded ray, which makes to-morrow cheerful as to-day,” this gentleman, on his entrance into the busy career of life, found himself not only as son and brother, but as companion and friend, as much beloved and as popular as, probably, any young man that ever existed.

Profiting by the opportunity which the peace with Buonaparte offered at this period, (1802,) he had left England, accompanied by his friend the Abbé Montblanc, now Archbishop of Tours, to visit that nation, which, one of its own members calls “a land of monkeys and tigers.” The following letters from my young friend, giving an animated and faithful picture of Paris during that interesting period, will not, I am sure, be unacceptable to my readers.

“Paris, July 26th, 1802.

“MY DEAR FRED,

“BETTER late than never.” You will, I hope, have attributed a portion of my negligence, to the continual occupation of my thoughts and time, amidst the pleasures of this new world. From Christ Church walk, to the gardens of the Thuilleries; from the cap and gown of Alma Mater, to the cap and gown of the Parisian *bona roba*, is, I think you will allow, transi-

tion enough to disturb the equilibrium of a steadier head than mine—*mais allons*; and now for some account of the ‘*grande nation*.’

“ The first discovery which an Englishman makes after a few days residence in France, is that the French are not the civil, polished, and obliging people they are described to have been, previous to the revolution; their *ancienne politesse* has fled with their *ancienne noblesse*.

“ On first acquaintance, the manners and customs of ‘regenerated France,’ form so strong a contrast with those of our own country, that the Englishman is inclined to note them in his diary, as the old pilot entered some other nation into his log book, ‘Customs, beastly; manners, none.’ But on further intimacy with them, the disgusting features are somewhat softened; and the facilities afforded for the free enjoyment of all the luxuries of life, in some measure compensate for the absence of all its decencies and comforts.

“ You may, perhaps, think this picture rather overcharged; but if you were to hear the oaths, and witness the conduct of the black, bushy faced *militaires*;—(and they all have served) also if you were to see them during dinner, *cracher*, on the glazed floor, and expose and open their dirty, snuffy *mouchoirs*, wider than their own *machoires*, before women, I think you would agree with me, that the French are not the polished people we have been accustomed to imagine them.

“ But, while I rail at French *grossiereté*, I must make one grand exception in favour of the ladies; good tempèr and good manners are still their characteristics. Nor is this *bon ton* confined to the higher classes; *la petite brodeuse est aussi gentile*, and *Mademoiselle la marchande des modes*, *vous debitera ses jolies phrases*, with as much playfulness and point as *Madame la Comtesse* herself. Do not, however, fear that I shall leave my heart with these syrens. Though the Parisians excel our more simple *demoiselles* of London in the elegance of their *tournure*, and in the taste with which they adorn their little heads, their little bodies, and their little feet, yet in freshness of complexion, and in other (what you term) desirable points, Dame Nature has bountifully made up to our damsels, for any deficiency on the part of her handmaid Art.

“ So much for the ladies; the detail of the other sights of

Paris, I reserve for chit-chat over the bottle: but I must mention the gallery of their vaunted Louvre, which is absolutely gorged with the most splendid *chef-d'œuvres* of art,—the pride and glory of the nations from which they had been stolen; yet, thank heaven, amidst all their triumphs, they do not possess one single *British trophy!* But to hear their contemptuous opinion of *our army*, one would imagine they were already advancing to seize all our 'good things.'

" 'If Buonaparte had fifty thousand men landed on your coast, how long would it take him to march from Dover to London?' was the insolent question a French officer addressed to me the other day.

" 'Just as long as it took him to march from Egypt to India,' was my answer.

" Very smart! you say—very,—particularly, as it might have cost me a trot to the *Bois de Boulogne*.

" Having mentioned Buonaparte, you will expect some account of this hero of the age, who is called *le premier consul*; but who is, in reality, *King of France*. I had an excellent opportunity of observing this great personage from the palace of the Thuilleries, as he reviewed the troops in *La Place Carrousel*. His figure is light, about the size of Braham; he sat his charger with much grace, and looked every inch a general; his face is bronzed, almost to an Egyptian hue; his eye, like Mars', 'to threaten or command;' and his mouth seemed to say, 'I can smile, and *torture* while I smile.' He is the idol of the French soldiery, and I fear will still prove a troublesome customer to John Bull, whom he does the honour to hate most cordially.

" After the review, I stood in the anti-chamber, as he passed through it. He flattered me with a look, not the most gracious: it seemed to say, 'What the devil do you do here?' It would have puzzled me to have answered this question.

" Here the fulness of my sheet, not lack of matter, forces me to an abrupt conclusion. If you would send me a line, and assure me that my *diurnalia* do not completely 'bore' you, I would return you an account of the Parisian theatricals.

" With best regards to all at home,

" Believe me, my dear Fred,

" Yours most truly,

HENRY HARRIS."

At this period, my thirteenth comedy, *Delays and Blunders*, was read in the green room. During one of the rehearsals of this comedy, poor Lewis was seized by an epileptic fit, and fell on the stage, totally senseless, and incapable of motion. For some moments it was supposed that the vital spark was extinct; but, owing to the timely arrival of Wilson, (the surgeon) and to his subsequent care and attention, this excellent and original comedian was soon restored to his friends and the stage.

In the case of this comedy, I will spare my reader the usual and sating account of success, &c. &c. simply stating, that this year my friend, Mr. Harris, liberally giving me a share in the profits, I received fifty pounds more than my usual dramatic income. On this occasion, too, I must not forget to add, that poor Emery, as a Yorkshireman, and Mrs. Lichfield in a very indifferent part, rendered me most essential service.

But by far the most attractive comedy during this, or, probably, during any past season, was written by my friend George Colman,—*John Bull*. It was acted fifty times, and averaged four hundred and seventy pounds every night. *Pizarro*, as I have previously stated, brought more money into the theatre; but, at the same time, it should be remembered that it also took more money out of it. When the treasurer strikes the balance, he will necessarily find a vast difference between the expenses attached to the production of what is technically termed a “blue coat and white waistcoat play,” and those of a “spangled and processional play.”

On the strength of the profits of *Delays and Blunders*, we took a amall house in Newman-street; where, amongst other very pleasant, friendly companions, I must enumerate Mrs. Siddons: and where, soon after our *entrè*, Holcroft, with whom I was only slightly acquainted, and who lived in the same street, did me the favour to pay me a visit. After seating himself, he avowed, in his usual frank, blunt manner, that his sole motive for calling was to know whether I meant to be *agreeable*: that is, as we were neighbours, whether I intended that we should be intimate. In course, I replied in the affirmative; but, from what cause I know not, he never afterwards gave me the opportunity of making the trial.*

* Gratitude requires I should mention, that, during the whole of Mrs. Reynolds's short theatrical career, she received from Mr. Holcroft and his family, the greatest kindness and hospitality.

With that charming and interesting woman, Mrs. Opie, (who was another neighbour,) I was more fortunate, and she became a frequent visiter at our house. I remember one day, while looking out of the parlour window, in company with this lady, and several other friends, we saw hurrying through the rain two celebrated theatrical personages, then lately married—the bride, in grand style, taking the lead, and the husband, at an obsequious distance, trotting after her—according to established rules in the best regulated families.—“How the poor man is muttering!” observed one of our party. “Muttering?” rejoined another, “nonsense, he is singing—

“A *master* I have, and I am his *man*;
Hayly, gauly,
Gambo, raly,
Higgledy, piggledy,
Galloping, galloway,
Draggle tail, dreary dun.”

At this period, my pleasant correspondent, Mr. Henry Harris, according to his promise, sent me the following continuation of his account of Paris.

“Paris, August 7th, 1802.

“MY DEAR FRED,

“ACCORDING to your wish, I now resume my pen and proceed to give you some information relative to your darling theme—the theatres. The principal of these, are constituted and regulated very differently from ours. Instead of being the private property of individuals, they are in the hands of government, and entirely under its direction and control. The performers are not ‘His Majesty’s servants,’ but, they may be said to be the *servants* of the constituted authorities. They can not even quit Paris without special permission, and if they *run restive*, refuse parts, &c. they are sent to cool their heads and heels ‘in durance vile.’ How would our *glorious eight* have liked this discipline?

“The expenses of the grand opera cost government above *thirty thousand pounds* sterling per annum, *beyond the receipts*. It is indeed a splendid national establishment, and forms one of the chief attractions to draw the influx of strangers to Paris, by which the government is repaid cent. per cent. for the large sums expended.

"I was much gratified by going behind the scenes, and viewing the machinery, which is of a very superior description: but I can not tune my ears to the pitch of grand French opera singing. The orchestra is numerous to excess, and plays so loudly, and keeps the singers so completely at the top of their voices, that their *première cantatrice*, Madame Maillard, screams like a *Mallard*. Perhaps, you have never heard that cry, a sea-gull would do as well; but then what would become of the *jeu de mot*?"

"You are aware of French excellence in every thing that relates to '*la danse*.' What we see by retail in London, we have here by wholesale. There are often scores of dancers in a scene, the *worst* of whom we should call a *first rate*. Vestris is still the '*Dieu de la danse*.' He has, however, a young and powerful rival in Duport; of whom, the Parisians make the *calembourg*. '*Vestris a fait naufrage en approchant du Port*.'

"The next theatre in rank, the first, perhaps, in classical dignity, is '*Le Théâtre Français*.' Though no French tragic actress can for an instant stand in competition with *our Sid-dons*, yet, Mademoiselle Duchesnois acts with much pathos; but, *helas!* she is '*Laide a faire peur*.' There is a *débutante*, Mademoiselle Georges, whom the dramatic critics pronounce of great promise; however, she is rather too *plump*, in my opinion, for *la figure tragique*.

"You have often heard of *Talma*, the *Buonaparte* of the theatre *Français*. He has a fine round voice, a good figure, and *more paw*, though *less pause* than *our tragic Don*. With his hands he will sometimes slap his thighs, and then he will clasp and shake them over his head. This action appears to an Englishman far from graceful, and yet the enthusiasm with which his performances are invariably received, would seem to imply that they have *truth* for their foundation. *Talma* must certainly be ranked as the best actor of French tragedy, now existing.

"I must not forget to notice that charming comic actress, *Mademoiselle Mars*; whose *eyes* alone have made more conquests, than her namesake, the *God of WAR*. She is a beautiful creature, combining all the vivacity and *enjouement* of a *Jordan*, with the grace and elegance of a *Farren*.

"Would you hear good singers with excellent acting, go to

the comic opera at Le Feydeau. There our English songsters might take a lesson, and learn, that more than a good voice is necessary for the formation of an accomplished theatrical singer. At Le Port St. Martin, an entirely novel species of entertainment is performed, called melodrama—mixing, as the name implies (*mélange drame*) the drama, and *ballé* of action; which latter, it will probably supersede. Holcroft, I understand, has translated one of these pieces for Covent Garden, and it will shortly be produced under the title of the *Tale of Mystery*.

“I have now done, and I believe, I have sent you a strong dose, as I shall not be able to repeat it these five or six months; for it will employ, at least, that time to make our purposed tour. My fellow traveller, the *Abbé*, is quite well, and as good-humoured as ever, except when he indulges in a *tirade* against “*Le vilain Corse*”—a circumstance, by the by, that the other day gave us a chance of viewing the interior of *Le Temple*. *Il fut ‘ses hommages,’ a l’amiable Madame Reynolds*, who I trust is well and happy.

“Adieu, my dear Fred,
 “And believe me,
 “Yours most truly,
 “H. HARRIS.”

Cooke’s evident success in *Sir Pertinax Mucusyphant*, induced me to introduce him in a Scotch character, in my succeeding comedy; and for this purpose, no less important a personage than the Gretna Green blacksmith was chosen. The play was called the *Three per Cents.*; and in this instance, the reader will be spared altogether the usual fatiguing repetition of success and profits, on account of one trivial reason—the comedy *was damned!*

Cooke, in *Mac-tac*, laboured nobly in the cause, and several times silenced the tempest; particularly on one occasion, when he describes to his nephew that he had been in Westminster Abbey, and had seen the tombs of Johnny Argyll, Johnny Milton, Billy Shakspeare, and “others of his ain dear countrymen.”

“Why, uncle,” exclaims his nephew, “did Milton and Shakspeare come from Scotland?”

“Hoot, mon,” replies *Mac-tac*, “where the de’il else could *sic elever* fellows come from?”

His inimitable and admirable mode of delivering this terse reply, so completely turned the tide in my favour, that I began to think I should weather the storm, and once more reach the shore in safety, if not in triumph. But, "*Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra,*" and soon I heard, "the fiend again," accompanied by that horrid and, to me, unaccustomed sound, "*Off, off, manager, manager.*" Terrified and alarmed, and doubting which was in greatest danger, my *play* or my *life*, without entering into a critical examination of the point, I allowed instinct to decide for me; and rushing into the streets, I commenced running, and never stopped till I reached home, and buried myself in my arm chair.

There I soon recovered from my panic, though not sufficiently to banish from my ears the dreadful din which still resounded there, nor to efface from my mind the unpleasant conviction, that I was, for the first time, a *damned author*.

As successful one, I had certainly been frequently favoured with the appellation of "lucky buffo" and "fortunate five act farce writer;" but now, on the principle of "when a man's down, down with him," I was to be called "rascal, swindler," and avoided by all civilized society. So persuaded was I, that this inevitably would prove the case, that the next day,—stealing sheepishly along the streets, and thinking that the eye of every stranger legibly expressed, *you are a d—d author*,—when I received the patronizing bow, and protecting nod of some of my friends, and the over-acted civility, and exaggerated condolence of others, I felt *highly honoured* by their great condescension.

However, that I was really the "lucky buffo" is evident; for, in one week after the failure of the *Three per Cents*, at Covent Garden, *The Caravan* was performed at Drury Lane, with success equalling, if not surpassing any of my previous productions.

The introduction of real water on the stage, and of a dog to jump into it, from a high rock, for the purpose of saving a child, were both incidents, at that time, so entirely unknown in theatrical exhibitions, that their very novelty rendered every body, during the production of the piece, most sanguine as to its success; provided, (for there is always one or more provisos on these occasions,) that the two principal performers, the animal and the element, could be brought into action.

Accordingly proposals and inquiries were soon set on foot; and being prosecuted “with a little *industry*,” (as one of the principal agents on this occasion, invariably expressed himself,) the objects of their search were at length found:—the water was hired from old father Thames, and the dog, of the proprietor of an *A-la-mode* beef shop.

The water we found tractable and accommodating; but during the first and second rehearsals, *Carlo*, (for such was the name of our hero,) sulked, and seemed, according to the technical phrase, inclined to “*play booty*.” After several other successive trials, he would not jump; but at last, owing to the platform on which he stood, being enclosed by two projecting scenes, and his attention being thus removed from the distractions of stage lights, boards, *et cetera*, he immediately made the desired leap, and repeated it at least a dozen times, as much to his own, as to our satisfaction. On the first representation of *The Caravan*, after his performance of this extraordinary feat, and after his triumphant *exit* with the supposed drowning child, the effect far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Thus *Carlo* was lauded to the skies; and in spite of the invidious and exaggerated detractions of its *classical* opponents, the water, as usual, *found its level*.

Thanks to my friend *Carlo*, I could now again boldly show my face, strut about the streets, and give patronizing bows, and protecting nods, in my turn—Money too!—If they were inclined to call me “swindler,” and “rascal,” for writing a failing comedy, what would they have called me, had they known that I cleared three hundred and fifty pounds simply by a dog jumping into a small tank of water!

After witnessing the first representation, I had not quitted the theatre above ten minutes, when Sheridan suddenly came into the green room, on purpose, as it was imagined, to wish the author joy.

“Where is he?” was the first question, “where is my guardian angel?”

“The author has just retired,” answered the prompter.

“Pooh,” replied Sheridan, “I mean the dog; actor, author, and preserver of Drury Lane Theatre.”

To Mr. Graham, to whom Mr. Sheridan had entrusted the reins of theatrical government, I was materially indebted during the whole progress of this transaction. He was as active

in his new character of theatrical director, as in his long established one of magistrate; and to him and Bannister, as his stage manager, *The Caravan* was principally indebted for its success.

The piece, as may be supposed, was first presented to Mr. Harris; but, it was not his fault, any more than mine, that *The Caravan* was not acted at Covent Garden. The stage of that theatre was then so contracted, that it admitted of no aquatic, indeed, scarcely of any great scenic introductions. However, not feeling wholly comfortable on the subject; fearing that in case of success, it might materially injure the sister theatre, I offered to dispose of my whole right and interest in the manuscript to Mr. Harris, for one half of the accustomed profits on a successful afterpiece.

The following gentlemanly note was the answer to my proposal.

“Bellemonte, September 29th, 1803.

“**MY DEAR FRIEND,**

“I HONOUR and thank you most heartily; true friendship is ever frank and explicit. The terms you propose are moderate and liberal: but being assured *you can be no loser by it*, I tell you without reserve, that I am satisfied it will be best for all parties, that the piece in question should be produced at Drury Lane. I therefore return it with real unaffected wishes for its success.

“**N. B.** No one will know that I have ever seen it.

“Ever most heartily

“Your attached friend, and servant,

T. HARRIS.”

“I hope Hill is now copying your comedy.”

But, for one moment to leave the successful, and return to the damned piece—On the falling of the curtain, Mr. Kemble, (then the acting manager) stepped forward with the kind intention of appealing, in mitigation of judgment; but appearing to be in rather a “questionable shape,” and displaying a somewhat unsteady gait, several of the audience called out, “Take care of the lamps.” The consequent surprise and clamour, augmenting the confusion, Kemble’s well intended appeal for

mercy failed; and *Hamlet* was announced for the following evening, with universal approbation.

To me, this was a subject of the most perfect indifference; I courted not any struggle, which I knew would be hopeless to myself and hurtful to the theatre. Accordingly, I wrote to Mr. Harris, informing him of my sentiments; and this gentleman calling on me the following morning, reminded me, that this was my first dramatic failure, after nearly twenty years service, and insisted that I should accept half the profits of a successful comedy. This sum, therefore, was most liberally immediately presented to me by Mr. Harris.

Two years afterwards, producing at Covent Garden two afterpieces called the *Deserts of Arabia*, and *Arbitration*, both manufactured from the *materiel* of the *Three per Cents*, this one night comedy, produced me more than any of my twenty night comedies, viz. seven hundred and forty pounds.—Another hint to young dramatists.

Kemble also called, and hoping I would not despond, kindly urged me, without loss of time, to return to the charge. Topham, Andrews, Morton, Lewis, Boaden, Taylor, Godwin, Cobb, and others, also called, and endeavoured to keep up my spirits. Some said the play had been unfairly treated, and had been damned by a pre-determined party; I do not believe one syllable of the assertion, and I have no more reason to blame the town for condemning this comedy, than I have to praise them for applauding others. On the first night of a new play, I consider there is always a fair fight between the author and the audience, and if the former get the better, whom has he to thank for his successful exertions but himself? I am no TRAITOR to *John Bull*,—I believe he is more inclined to be good-natured than ill-natured, but in my humble opinion, a *dramatic writer* is no more indebted to the public for the money he makes by them, than is a merchant, banker, or any other active, honourable *speculator*.

Of Kemble, I must say, that in several characters—particularly in those of the Roman, and the Misanthrope, he was unquestionably the finest actor I ever saw, and off the stage, his unaffected simplicity of manner, rendered him most pleasing and entertaining. One more instance of this simplicity I well remember. Meeting him at a dinner in the city, not long after he had performed *Charles*, in the *School for Scandal*,

when, our flattering host asserting that this character had been lost to the stage, since the days of Smith, added, that Kemble's performance of it, should be considered as "*Charles's Restoration.*"

To this, a less complimentary guest, replied, in an under tone, evidently intending not to be heard by the subject of his remark, that, in his opinion, this performance should rather be considered as "*Charles's Martyrdom.*"

Our witty critic, however, did not speak so low, but that the great tragedian heard him; when to our surprise and amusement, instead of manifesting indignation and making a scene, he smiled and said,

"Well now, that gentleman is not altogether singular in his opinion, as, if you will give me leave, I will prove to you. A few months ago, having unfortunately taken what is usually called a glass too much, on my return, late at night, I inadvertently quarrelled with a gentleman in the street. This gentleman, very properly called on me the following morning, for an explanation of what was certainly more accidental than intentional. Sir, said I, when I commit an error, I am always ready to atone for it; and if you will only name any reasonable reparation in my power, I—'Sir,' interrupted the gentleman, 'at once I meet your proposal, and name one. Solemnly promise, in the presence of this, my friend, that you will never play *Charles Surface* again, and I am perfectly satisfied.' Well, I did promise, not from *nervosity*, as you may suppose, gentlemen; but because, though Sheridan was pleased to say, that he liked me in the part, I certainly did not like myself in it—no, no more than that gentleman who has just done me the favour to call it '*Charles's Martyrdom.*'"

Kemble, on many previous occasions, having publicly proved his courage, I need not add, that we were all convinced, that on this occasion, he was only actuated by good taste and good nature.

Taking this gentleman's advice, I now turned my thoughts towards another comedy, and as usual, I again began to think on *paper*; starting with the four following jokes, which had been regularly cut out during the rehearsals of four or five of my previous comedies.

First—An American general's saying, "Let us all *hang together*, or we shall *hang separately*."

Second—A Scotch laird, seeing a thief descend a wall to rob his garden, crying out, “Where are you going, rascal?” “*Bock again,*” replied the thief.

Third—In the North they do not *give* dinners, they *lend* them.

Fourth—The son of a hair dresser, who had become an eminent conveyancer, and was also a great caviller at titles, boasting that he lived by

“*Splitting hairs and cutting off tails.*”

Notwithstanding my perseverance, these facetious efforts were all cut out for the sixth time. This comedy was called *The Blind Bargain*, and was more lucrative to me than any of my previous productions, in consequence of Mr. Harris having volunteered giving me two hundred pounds for my copyright. Lewis, in *Tourly*, again kept up the ball, and Kemble, in *Villars*, a part wholly unworthy of his great talents, rendered me essential service. During one of the rehearsals, observing my uneasiness, because an actor delivered his cue to him, in a very slovenly manner, he approached me, and said,

“Never mind, Reynolds, don’t be afraid; let him conclude his sentence as coldly or as carelessly as he pleases, by my reply I will insure you three rounds of applause.”

He kept his word; and when I add that this answer consisted solely of the word “Never,” the reader may imagine to what extent the author was indebted to the actor. To my brother dramatist, Thomas Dibdin, I was also indebted: as he wrote for this comedy a very pleasant epilogue.

Just at this time, the whole theatrical world was in commotion at the expected arrival of Master Betty, whose celebrity was so excessive, that though *unseen* and *untried* on the London stage, it was with truth averred, that not a place could be procured for his first six nights.—One evening, during the run of *The Blind Bargain*, whilst sitting in the first circle, shortly after the commencement of the second act, a gentleman, and a very pretty boy, apparently about eleven years of age, entered the box, and seated themselves close to me. The former, among various other theatrical questions, asked which was Kemble, which was Lewis, and seemed eagerly to devour my replies, while the boy, engaged in the more important occupation of devouring an orange, seemed as inattentive and indifferent to mine, and his protector’s conversation, as to the pro-

ceedings on the stage. Between the inquisitiveness of the one, and the listlessness of the other, I, myself, was fast approaching a torpid, *ennuyé* state; when one of the fruit women entered the box, and whispered to me, that I was sitting between Master and Mr. Betty.

“How do you know?” quoth I.

“From the superintendent of the free list,” she rejoined, to whom they gave their names.”

Now, aware that this little phenomenon, this small, or rather great snow ball, which had been *made* at Belfast and had rolled on, attaining through every town additional magnitude, till it reached Birmingham, was advertised to appear on the following Monday in *Achmet*, in *Barbarossa*, I began to believe the truth of the fruit woman’s information. Consequently, curiosity induced me to take another peep, when, at this moment, the door was burst open, and hundreds deserting their boxes, attempted to rush into ours. The pressure became so extremely formidable, that Mr. Betty, in considerable alarm, called loudly for the box-keeper; who, not being able to come, on account of the crowd, I urgently requested the terrified father and son to submit themselves to my guidance: and they complying, followed me to the box door. The crowd imagining that they should have a better view of this *parvus redivivus* Garrick, in the lobby, made way for us right and left, when I delivered them into the hands of Hill, the box-keeper, who opened a door leading behind the scenes, and making them enter it, the *pack* were suddenly “at fault,” and the *pursued* took safe shelter in the *cover* of the green room.

Some years after the expiration of this absurd mania, I became acquainted with Mr. Betty; and, during a negociation with him, relative to an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre, I found that he possessed as much liberality and as little vanity, as any gentleman with whom I have had the pleasure to be acquainted. But, though I give this suffrage to the *amiable* qualities of his manhood, I can not say as much for the *histrionic* qualities of his boyhood; when, instead of joining with the enthusiastic majority devoted to him, I openly avowed myself one of the opposing minority, and, consequently, led a life of argument and tumult. As a specimen. During the height of the *Roscius rage*, dining for the first time at Sir Frederick Eden’s house in Pall Mall, where there were as

many fine ladies as fine gentlemen, *Master Betty* was, naturally, the leading—nay, the exclusive subject of conversation. An elderly lady, sighing and throwing up her eyes towards the ceiling, exclaimed—

“ I fear, I fear we shall soon lose him,” evidently thinking, I presume, with Shakspeare,—

“ So wise, so young, they say, do ne’er live long.”

Another enthusiast, fanning herself, asserted with much indignation, that she had no patience with John Kemble; for, when his asthma was in its very worst state, instead of nursing himself at home, he came into his box, as if purposely for the chance of coughing down his paramount opponent.

A third said to a lady near to her, “ I saw your dear boy to-day, and how I do envy you. Certainly, he most strongly resembles the divine Master Betty.”

I actually writhed under all this ecstatic nonsense; and my suppressed tortures arose to an almost ungovernable height, when I heard several of the male idolaters add encomiums of an equally extravagant nature. At length, Sir Frederick Eden said,

“ Reynolds, why are you silent? From your long theatrical experience, you must, no doubt, have formed a good opinion on this subject.”

“ Indeed! a dramatic author in the room,” said an old gentleman; “ now, ladies, we shall have fresh beauties discovered. Perhaps, Sir, you remember Garrick and Henderson!” I bowed assent. “ Now, Sir, I ask you, upon your honour, does not the boy surpass both?”

“ Oh, certainly,” was the self-satisfied murmur through the room.

“ No, Sir,” I replied, bursting with rage, “ I answer upon my honour that he does *not*; for, with all due deference to what has been said, I doubt whether he can even pronounce the very word by which he lives.”

“ And pray, Sir,” they simultaneously demanded, “ what may that word be?”

To which, (more and more provoked) I boldly replied, almost at the risk of my personal safety,

“ HUMBUG.”

Here I was interrupted by a yell so terrific, that probably I

should have been inclined to qualify or soften this bold assertion, had I not seen, by the secret signs and encouraging nods of my worthy host, that he completely agreed with me; so, I continued gallantly to defend myself against the attacks of my numerous and tumultuous assailants, until the blue stocking part of this cabal sent me to *Coventry*. Shortly afterwards they retired, leaving me and the male portion of the company with Sir Frederick, who now openly expressed his accordance in my opinions, and laughing, gave me joy and said—

“Pan quits the plain, but *Pol* remains.”

However, my triumph was but temporary; for this was one of the houses to which I was never invited a second time.

What salary the great Roman *Roscius* received, I do not know; but that the little English *Roscius* was paid fifty pounds per night, every body knows—and at the very time that John Kemble was engaged at thirty-seven pounds, sixteen shillings a week, and Lewis twenty pounds for the same period. But, the boy’s pecuniary emoluments, when contrasted with those of the previous English *Rosciis*, are rendered still more ridiculous. Betterton, in 1709, having only four pounds per week; and Quin, in 1734, having only one pound five shillings per night; which sums were considered adequate remuneration for transcendent talent, even when that valuable institution, the Theatrical Fund, was not in existence.

But, to conclude this subject. To *Master Betty*, as a boy, and a bad actor, the whole town flocked; *Mister Betty*, as a man, and a good second-rate actor, scarcely an individual came: yet, for once, the foolery of fashion had beneficial results; since, in the present case, provided for the after life of a most amiable young man and his family.

As nothing particular occurred during either the rehearsals or the representations of the following pieces, I will class them together.

1805.—*Out of Place, or the Lake of Lausanne*, a musical afterpiece; music by Braham and Reeve; *Lauretta* by Signora Storace, *Young Valteline*, Mr. Braham. Profit—three hundred pounds.

1807.—*The Delinquent*, a comedy. *Delinquent*, Mr. Kemble. Profit—five hundred pounds.

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1808.—*The Deserts of Arabia*, and *Arbitration*, both musical afterpieces; music by Lanza. Profit on the two—four hundred and seventy pounds.

1808.—*Begone dull Care, or How will it end*, a comedy. *Modern*, by Mr. Lewis; *Solace*, by Mr. Emery. Profit—five hundred pounds.

The hue and cry against modern comedy now increased to a formidable height: the good, old, legitimate, classical drama was, more and more, desired, and dramatists were advised to write for fame alone. Certainly fame has its advantages; but, as O'Keefe says, in his comedy of *The Young Quaker*, “there is no harm in a guinea.” Lawyers, physicians, and other professional characters frequently increase in reputation as they increase in age; until, at the very moment dotage empties their heads, credulity fills their pockets. But with an author the case is very different; when time impairs, or dries up the vivid juices of his brain, can *he* exist on his former reputation? Will the public encourage him, *as he is*, for the sake of what *he was*? No; his *past* efforts only recoil: and yet, there are people who still recommend the *Horatian* maxim, “*nonum prematur in annum*;” by which maxim, in thirty-six years a man might compose four classical dramas. Now, allowing two of these to be damned,—for their classicality unfortunately will not mend their chance of success,—this same author will have not only *LAUREL* in abundance to cover himself, and perhaps a wife, who, “*nonum parturit in mensem*,” but a clear terminable income of about *twenty pounds!*

Submitting at this period to the fias of that great engine, the press, and feeling that I had exhausted myself, as a writer of comedies, (though others like my friend Const, might have said, “Exhausted! with what?) I tacked about, and seeking for other, and more novel matter, adopted the melo-dramatic opera. I chose for my plot Madame Cottin’s beautiful story of Elizabeth: and during the summer, which was again passed at Swansea, with my wife’s uncle, Colonel Landeg, I lost no time in completing my task.

Though the Colonel was a man of very few words, yet those few words were usually quaint and amusing, as the following brief anecdote will exemplify.

One day after dinner, talking of the hardship of a curate’s life, “There is a rich rector in Worcestershire,” said one of

the Colonel's guests, "whose name I can not recollect, but, who has not preached for the last twelve months, as he every Sunday requests one of the neighbouring clergy to officiate for him."

"Oh!" replied the Colonel, "though you can not recollect his name, I can—it is 'England'—“*England expects every man to do his duty.*”*

Colonel Landeg, in consequence of his declining state of health, was prescribed by his physician, Doctor Elliot, to repair to Bath, and drink the waters of that city. Thither, therefore, early in the month of September, 1818, my wife, her sister, and myself accompanied him; where, after remaining with him a few days, his medical attendant apprehending no immediate danger, I, (having finished my melo-dramatic opera called *The Exile*) departed with it for London.

Travelling by the night coach, when we reached Chippenham, we were joined by a most garrulous, but at the same time, a most agreeable passenger, at least, such he proved to me; and as he may probably prove not unentertaining to others, I will risk narrating some of his anecdotes. This young gentleman had lately been on a visit to Lord Harcourt, at Nuneham, where he had met divers persons of celebrity; amongst others, Mrs. Siddons, of whom he spoke in terms almost of rapture, both in her public and private life. During the summer, he said, he had been at an evening party at her favourite cottage at Westbourn, on the Harrow road; to which pleasant residence, only one annoyance was attached; an adjoining small tavern and tea garden. So narrow was the separation between these two houses, (being merely divided by a hedge) that the publican, after displaying in large letters, "Licensed to sell wines, and spirituous liquors," left remaining, in larger letters, (long placed there to mark the separate establishment) "N. B. No connection with next door."

Proceeding to another subject, our indefatigable orator now informed us, that he was present at the first review of the Prince of Wales's corps, after Andrews's appointment to the Colonelship. Being asked by a countryman, standing near him, who was the commander of the regiment, our witty fellow traveller pointed to Andrews, (whose celebrity in a par-

* I have heard this light pun since, but I am convinced that it originated as I have stated.

ticular branch of dramatic composition must be remembered,) and said,

“ He with the *epilogues* on his shoulders.”

Our amusing friend had likewise seen, what many others of that day had seen, a multitude of martial heroes, who, owing to Buonaparte’s threatened invasion, had suddenly entered volunteer corps, and assumed a red coat, and a “flashy outside;” but he had never seen the dramatic writer, he added, who, resisting this military mania, had returned to the Deputy-lieutenants, on the printed circular, as a ground of exemption from service,

“ *Lame, and a Coward!*”

“ Certainly,” he continued, “ very candid, and not in the least similar to *Falstaff* or *Bessus.*”

“ My father, however,” he went on, “ has seen the said dramatist (Reynolds) and he says, that he talks much better than he writes.—In my opinion, certainly, this is no very difficult task; as any gentleman here, who, like myself, has had the misfortune to witness the representation of any of his innumerable five-act farces, will also, I am sure, willingly testify.”

“ I have seen many of them,” I replied, “ and judging by the specimens of dialogue they offer, I should imagine, that the author could not even possess so much conversational talent, as you seem inclined to allow him.”

“ I beg your pardon,” rejoined my companion, “ my father once met him at Doctor Parr’s, where, the conversation turning on the Hebrew language, Reynolds, among the rest, proceeded to give his opinions; when he was suddenly interrupted by the author of a confused, and failing novel, then lately published, who jeeringly cried,

“ Come, come, Mr. Dramatist, you know nothing of this matter—No—not even *one* of the names of the few Hebrew books now in existence.”

“ ‘Don’t I,’ rejoined the playwright, ‘I know the names of *two*; the one is *The new Testament*, and the other is *your new novel.*’ “ This retort completely silenced Mr. Novelist, I assure you.”

“ No doubt,” I rejoined, “ for, a very neat retort it is: indeed, I have only one slight fault to find with your whole story, and that is, in the first place, this retort was never made by Rey-

nolds; and, in the second place, Reynolds *never* dined with Doctor Parr."

"Indeed, Sir!" said my amazed companion, "and pray who told you so?"

"Reynolds himself; who, at this moment, has the pleasure *personally* to assure you of the truth of his assertion."

Owing to the darkness of the night, I could not perceive the alteration of his countenance; for, that there must have been a very striking one, I infer from the striking change in his conversation. He vowed, that he had been only jesting, and hoped he had given no offence; when I, to prove that I had taken none, held out my hand, and requested a continuation of his amusing conversation. From this moment, he became extravagantly, and ridiculously civil; helping me most prodigiously at supper; superintending the removal of my luggage from one coach to another—raising and lowering the window, on a hint, or even a gesture—in short, during the remainder of the journey, I had an active and zealous servant, free of all expense. And this is not the first, nor will it be the last time, that an author has gained as much by censure, as by panegyric.—Any thing but obscurity.

On my arrival in town, I presented *The Exile* to Mr. Henry Harris; who called on me in the evening, in Newman-street, not only to state how highly his father and himself approved of the piece, but, to cast the parts and arrange the scenery. Before, however, we had made much progress, I received (by express,) a letter from Bath, informing me Colonel Landeg's lady had so alarmingly increased, that it was absolutely necessary I should immediately return if I hoped ever again to see this esteemed relative. In consequence of this communication,—but, little anticipating that the entertainments of that evening were the last that would ever be performed within the walls of old Covent Garden Theatre,—Mr. Henry Harris and I immediately separated.

Rising next morning before the lark, I proceeded to the White Horse Cellar, with the intention of getting into the first conveyance that might be going to, or through, Bath. After waiting at this place some time, I heard the watchman say "past four o'clock;" gratuitously adding to this compulsory speech, "Bless us, what a large chimney is on fire there!" I looked in the direction to which he was turned, and soon saw,

by the rapid increase of the flames, that, instead of a large chimney, some extensive building, apparently in the neighbourhood of Leicester-fields, was in a state of universal conflagration.

At this moment, the expected carriage arriving, I was compelled to depart, without learning any further particulars. On reaching Knightsbridge, the crimson appearance of the sky, and the gigantic volumes of ascending smoke, gave the astonished beholder the idea that half the metropolis was in a state of conflagration. At Hounslow, from a coach which overtook us, we were informed that Drury Lane was the victim of the devouring element; but at Salt Hill, the fatal truth was revealed, and, at that very moment, Covent Garden Theatre was partially, perhaps wholly, reduced to ashes.

I looked around for consolation—in vain—at length a *sympathetic* passenger, half asleep and half awake, muttered out, “What! only one house of Satan destroyed?” “No!” said a female next to him, “and by the devil’s aid, I am certain that will soon be built again.”

As may be supposed, I had but a sorry journey; and on my arrival at Bath, my spirits were not rendered more cheerful by the information, that the Colonel, after a long endurance of suffering, had died on the previous evening, with a calmness and fortitude equally remarkable.

On opening his will, I found, to my astonishment, that he had bequeathed the whole of his real and personal estate to my second son, Richard, (then a child not three years old,) appointing William Vaughan, Esq. of Lantrissent, and myself, executors. The landed property alone, consisting of sixteen hundred acres, surrounded by collieries, canals, and copper works, on my return, the London newspapers (I presume to fill up a space, which could not be better supplied,) again promulgated the report, that an additional fortune had been bequeathed to the *rich* Mr. Reynolds. Here, then, I was once more, flowing with the wealth of Asia, making all obstacles dissolve before me, like snow before the sun; and now, in course, about to become a leading member of the Million Club. But “wait you,” as the Welch say, and “mark the end on’t.” A caveat was entered in the Commons, a settlement in the Hindoo language was set up, and I, and my co-trustee, were referred to General R——, (then on a tour through the west of

England,) for a confirmation of the validity of the deed. So that, as a pleasant friend of mine said, this magnificent Welch bequest was likely to prove the "most *unlucky, lucky* event which ever happened to a family."

We wrote to General R——, and greatly to our surprise and disappointment, he answered that he had no doubt of the truth of the claim. Still, however, indulging hope, and believing that the Colonel would never have bequeathed property to my son, which he had before disposed of to another, Mr. Vaughan and I waited upon Sir Charles Cockerell; in the supposition, that, as the intimate friend of General R——, and of the late Colonel Landeg, he was the most probable person to decide this serious case. Having stated to this gentleman, that we had received, during the same week, from his friend, the General, a very dissatisfactory letter, relative to the Brinwillach property, and which, if correct, would deprive my son of the whole of the Colonel's bequest, we requested him to inform us whether he could not aid us, in the elucidations of this extraordinary transaction.

"You received the General's answer this week?" replied Sir Charles; "that is singular, indeed; for, to my certain knowledge, the General died at Calcutta six years ago."

So far the mystery was solved; and shortly afterwards, by the friendly exertions, and extraordinary activity of Mr. Freeling, of the post-office, the *sham general* (a disappointed expectant) was discovered and defeated. The victory, however, cost us dear; for Mr. Vaughan, naturally and properly, apprehending some future attack on the estate, with my full consent and accordance, threw the whole matter into Chancery; there we remained for many years, and as the estate is charged with an annuity, (which, after the payment of debt and costs, prevents me and my son, at this moment from being benefitted one sixpence) though I can not exactly say what sum the devisee himself may ultimately obtain, I know that my share will never qualify me to be a member of the *Million Club*.

When I recollect the number of attacks which this estate has experienced, instead of wondering that it has not enriched me, my only consolation is, that it did not send me into the King's Bench. Indeed, such probably might have been the case had I not been most essentially aided by an active and liberal mas-

ter in Chancery (Morris), an honourable co-trustee, and those most respectable solicitors, Messrs. Edwards and Lyons. Yet, even to this hour, after years of personal risk and labour, all parties are not satisfied. Who would be an executor? I have been *seven* times entrusted with this arduous, unprofitable and ungracious office; and notwithstanding all my exertions and assiduity, (excepting in two cases,) never having been able to satisfy above half the parties interested, I presume I may repeat without offence, *Who would be an executor?*

On my return to London, I found the *Exile* in rehearsal at the Opera House, where the Covent Garden company were then acting; all of whom, wishing to support Mr. Harris in his misfortune, we had the satisfaction to find the new play very strongly cast. The music was composed characteristically and effectively, by Mazzinghi: and the whole of the stage business was arranged under the able direction of Mr. Farley.

The *Exile* was performed in November, 1808: * my profits amounted to six hundred pounds, and the receipts for twenty-two nights averaged on each, upwards of four hundred pounds. But when Mr. Harris, by his agreement with Mr. Taylor, was compelled to leave the Opera House,—where the public could scarcely either *hear or see*,—and perform at the little theatre in the Haymarket,—where the public could enjoy *both these faculties*, in their perfection,—the receipt, on the first night *The Exile* was performed there, barely amounted to one hundred and sixty pounds.

Perhaps the wags may say, that the very cause of this sudden diminution of the receipts, was, that the piece was both *heard and seen*. I am sorry to mar this joke, but, I must add that on the nights Mrs. Siddons, Kemble and Cooke performed in *The Gamester*, and in *Venice Preserved*, the receipts were frequently *less*; a convincing proof, I imagine, that, though the public usually censure and abuse large theatres, yet, in *their hearts*, they infinitely prefer them to those of a less size: involuntarily feeling that in addition to their superior cheerfulness, accommodation, and magnificence, they afford far more scope for the effects of those lasting theatrical *stars*,—scenery, pageantry, and music.

* Mr. Young commenced his engagement with Mr. Harris in the character of *Daran*, in this play.

The new Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, under the direction of Mr. Smirke, was in a rapid state of advancement, and (as is well known) the foundation stone of this magnificent and costly edifice, was laid on the 31st of December, 1808, by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in person, as Grand Master of the Freemasons of Great Britain, the whole ceremony was most imposing and interesting; particularly as the illustrious chief actor on this occasion, by the dignity, grace and politeness of his manners, tended so materially to increase the charm of the scene.

The consequences of this festive day, were, however, most melancholy to me and all the other friends of Mr. Harris; who, whether owing to the severity of the weather, or his great exertions, was, on the following evening, at his seat at Belle-monte, seized with that paralytic affection, which he retained during the remainder of his life: and which, probably, would have proved fatal on the first attack, but for the united and unremitting attentions of his wife, son, and daughter. That excellent woman, Mrs. Harris, died some years before him; but his charming and accomplished daughter lived with him till his last moments:—thus, rendering himself even more interesting by this voluntary and disinterested abandonment of the world, than by all the talents and personal attractions, that qualified her to shine in it, among the fairest and most distinguished.

In consequence of this severe and protracted indisposition of his father, Mr. Henry Harris was obliged to assume the management of Covent Garden Theatre, as his representative, at a period replete with misfortunes and difficulties, sufficient to baffle the experience of the most practised manager. Mr. Harris had a second son, who is now captain of the Hussar frigate, and likewise K. C. B.—The Gazette has more than once recorded his victories.

The new Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, opened, according to the promise of the manager, on the 18th of September, 1809, and thus this splendid edifice was erected within a year. If, however, the manager and architect expected any praise and patronage from the public, for the rapidity and skill with which they had executed their gigantic undertaking, they were vastly deceived: for, on the opening of the theatre, a riot commenced, which continued above three months. All London,

and half England were engaged in this *mighty* contest; and had the dethronement of a powerful despot, instead of the humiliation of a liberal manager, been the object of these numerous and desperate malecontents, they could not have pursued their purposes with greater vigour and animosity.

On the 14th of December, when this protracted warfare terminated in favour of the *Cromwellites*, and the party of the aristocrats, *i. e.* the managers, were defeated, the glorious news was immediately spread throughout the kingdom, by the coachmen and guards of the various coaches, wearing in their hats a label, on which was inscribed in letters, as formidable in size as important in expression, the word “**VICTORY**,” surmounted by sprigs of *laurel*.

Never, indeed, had England more real cause for triumph, for now, all her free-born sons, instead of *four* shillings, could positively march into the pit for three shillings and *sixpence*; and thus, every independent John Bull, who visited the theatre four times in the season, would save *two* shillings. Magnanimous achievement!—for ever forgotten be the *Battle of the Spurs*, and henceforth, let all future historians celebrate this thrice glorious *sixpenny war*!

Kemble, in my opinion, was used most shamefully during this transaction; yet, I must confess, it was partly his own fault, for though a very fine actor, he was not the *best* of orators—for instance, one night, when, after the greatest difficulty, he had procured a hearing, anxious to prove the immense number of years the old prices had been established, he commenced his speech with an allusion to Queen Anne—but he had scarcely uttered her Majesty’s name, when a wag in the gallery vehemently vociferated,

“*Queen Anne’s dead! HEAR, HEAR!*” but there was not another word heard on that evening.

On the fifth night, when he was again heard, he proposed to submit the state of the proprietors’ affairs to a committee of gentlemen of unimpeachable impartiality and honour, and proceeding to mention them, unluckily began with “the Attorney General of England;” a name never very popular, even in the most quiet times, but at this period, so decidedly unpopular, that it had scarcely been mentioned, when our orator’s oration was again unceremoniously nipt in the bud.

On the report of the committee, signed by Sir Charles Price

—the Solicitor General, Sir Thomas Plomer—the Govenor of the Bank, John Whitmore—the Recorder of London, John Sylvester, and John Julius Angerstein;—the O P's having pre-determined not to abandon the *row*, openly objected to the decision of Mr. Henry Harris and Mr. Kemble's committee. On the seventh night, Kemble was again heard, when he thus addressed them;—

“Ladies and gentlemen, the report of the committee is now published, accompanied by the documents, and—”*

“Where are the documents?” was the general cry: “Are we to be tried by the Recorder? No, no!—show *us* the documents, and *we* ourselves, will be *your* judges!”

Modest resolution!—avowing, without qualification or evasion, what their whole previous conduct had evinced—their determination to consider the theatre, not as private, but as public property, and *themselves*, (not Messrs. Harris and Kemble,) the *real* proprietors and managers.

Madame Catalani having been engaged, and Mr. Harris having determined she should make her first appearance on the Covent Garden boards, in my forthcoming new play, *The Free Knights*, I used frequently to visit her and her husband, M. Valabréque, on business relative to this subject, at their house in the New Road. Accustomed to universal praise, to be the admiration of all audiences, Catalani naturally shrunk, with alarm, almost amounting to horror, from the nightly attacks offered to her name, by the hostile *anti-foreign talent* partisans. One day, she was so much agitated by the account of the placards exhibited against her on the previous evening, that she talked of building a watchbox in her garden, and engaging an athletic watchman, armed with a blunderbuss, to defend them against “*les barbares O'pis*.”

Another time, when she and M. Valabréque were informed, by one of their countrymen, that, on the first night of her appearance she would certainly be pelted with apples, she exclaimed, with the greatest earnestness and *naiveté*—

“Ah, *mon Dieu*, Sare, I hope dey vill be *roasted*!”

When this celebrated female's unequalled voice, engaging

* The report of the committee proved, that the ruin of the proprietors would be inevitable, unless they were to adhere to the new prices of admission.

manners, and amiable character are considered, surely no one will hesitate to say, never did a public performer receive either more ungenerous, or more unmerited treatment.

During the hottest of this grand conflict, Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning fought a duel; an event, that at any other period would have created a powerful and universal sensation, but, at the present, scarcely any person took the trouble to inquire either the cause or the result of this, the *less* conflict.

On the eleventh or twelfth night of this "din of war," as I was entering the theatre, I met a French acquaintance of mine, M. Dejeant, who had that morning arrived from France. He was rushing down the stairs of the Bow-street entrance, when I advanced and asked him what was the cause of his impatience. "Morbleu," he replied, "dere be de grand mob riot in de house—mais arretez un moment, and you shall see how I vill stop him."

"Indeed!" I replied, "then you are the very man for whom we have been so long searching."

"*Oui*—yes, you shall see," he rejoined; "ah! *les voila!* dere they be who shall stop him!—*Venez mes amis!*—*Venez soldats.*"

The soldiers never moved.

"*Sacrebleu!*" exclaimed my enraged friend, "*coquins!* I vill have you *broke*—*flog!*"

I attempted to convince him that they dared not interfere. "*Non!*—*pourquoi donc?*" stamping violently, "are dey *here* at all?" This question being easier to ask than to resolve, I hesitated a moment, and then replied, that they were present merely for the sake of show. "Show!—de Ingelis den is *show* army; begar, de French is no *show* army, as you shall one day see!" and away he went muttering "*Pauvre petite Grande Bretagne.*"

This miserable contest was not terminated, as it is now supposed to have been, on the night of the 14th of December; when, Mr. Kemble met Mr. Clifford and the other O. P.'s, at their triumphant dinner at the Crown and Anchor. No—on the following morning, some members of the Westminster committee informed Messrs. Harris and Kemble, that the private boxes must be reduced to the number of which they consisted during the year 1802. To which *flat* the managers,

exhausted by this tedious contest, and conscious that their fortress was in a state of distress, bordering on famine, wisely conceded: and here, therefore, this outrageous altercation terminated. But, perhaps, during the whole period of its duration, one of the most extraordinary of all the most extraordinary circumstances which occurred, was, that all the Dukes and Duchesses, Marquesses and Marchionesses, Earls and Countesses, walked quietly out of their private boxes, at the command of five *Westminster consuls*.

The Free Knights, or the Edict of Charlemagne, was the first new play performed in this beautiful theatre. Catalani, however, did not appear; luckily for herself, the manager and the author; for the character intended for her was so awkward and unnecessary an introduction, that, as Mr. Harris truly said, she would have ruined the piece, and the piece would have ruined Catalani.

The Free Knights afforded me reason again to rejoice that the attacks and censures on my five act farces had induced me to adopt another species of dramatic production; for though these three act musical dramas were infinitely less laborious in their composition than my comedies, yet they were far more lucrative: my profits on this latter amounting to seven hundred pounds, *i. e.* five hundred from the theatre, and two hundred pounds for the copy right.*

Mr. Young performed the principal character in this piece, the *Abbot of Corbey*.

Poor Lewis, to the infinite regret of his numerous friends, and the admirers of sterling and original comic acting, took his leave of the stage in the *Copper Captain*, in *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, on the night of the 28th of May, 1809, and died January the 30th, 1811, at his house in Westbourn-place. He bequeathed a large fortune to his wife and children, and appointed Mr. Const and myself his executors. Though this trust, like my other trusts, was attended with certain difficulties, yet I must not ungraciously forget to acknowledge, that, owing to the constant attentions and mild compliant dispositions of Mrs. Lewis and her whole family, and to the friendly

* As a proof of the difficulty of writing a successful five act comedy, I will state, (with accuracy I believe) that only two have turned the twentieth night, during the last eighteen years, "*Education*," by Morton, and "*Pride shall have a Fall*," by the Rev. G. Croly.

aid of my coadjutor, Const, it has proved to me a source of great gratification.

How much this matchless *gentlemanly* comedian was respected in private life, is evident, as, on the day succeeding the violent epileptic attack, which he experienced during the rehearsal of "*Delays and Blunders*," amongst many other high personages, who kindly called at his house, to make inquiries concerning his health, were his present Majesty, and His Royal Highness the Duke of York. Thus truly should "desert be crowned."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CONCLUSION.

“ This wicked world was once my dear delight,
Now all my conquests, all my charms, good night;
The flour consum'd, the best that now I can,
Is e'en to make my market of the bran.”

POPE.

As my work is fast approaching its termination, it may be asked, why I have forborne to mention various well known theatrical occurrences, which have happened during my life, and in most of which, indeed, I have been, either directly or indirectly, concerned. I will answer simply, that my very reason for not recurring or alluding to these well known circumstances, is that they are *well known*.

At this period, Covent Garden Theatre was pursuing a prosperous and lucrative career, chiefly owing to its moderate expenditure. *Twenty pounds per week* was then deemed a first rate salary; what a principal actor's is *now*, being *hors de combat* in theatricals, I can not say; but I should hope that, as the receipts (owing to the vast number of minor theatres) have decreased, the salaries have not increased. However, this is delicate ground, and certainly more a manager's than a dramatist's business; yet I can not refrain from noticing one hacknied argument regarding high salaries, regularly used by their partisans, namely, that though an actor, receiving twenty or forty pounds per night, do not bring the theatre one tenth part of that sum, he is a *fool* if he do not walk into the treasury, and demand every farthing of his stipulated payment. A *bargain*, it is said, is a *bargain*; it may be so in *Change Alley* and *Duke's Place*; but I never can believe that it is thus considered by the professors of a most liberal and enlightened art.

To prove that it is *not* so considered, and that there *are* theatrical persons who have dissented from the manager's regulation in his own play bills, (“ *no money to be returned*,”)

I will name two instances—first, Thomas Morton, secondly, Theodore Hook; the former of whom having restored to Mr. Harris, a considerable share out of five hundred pounds paid him on the opera of the *Blind Girl*; and the latter, having remitted to Mr. Henry Harris, from the Isle of France, the whole of a sum which had been advanced to him *as a retaining fee*, on a play, he purposed to have written.

In the year 1812, I produced two more musical dramas,—*The Virgin of the Sun* and *The Renegade*: the former was founded on Marmontel's *Incas* and Kotzebue's *Virgin of the Sun*: the latter, on Dryden's *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal*, with gleanings from the *Spanish Friar*.—The destruction of the Temple of the Sun by an *earthquake*, and of a large Moorish vessel by a *waterspout*, were two of the principal features of these successful pieces;—but, weary as the reader I fear must be with my reiterated repetition of profits, I will spare him the account of what I gained by Kotzebue, Dryden, and the aforesaid *Earthquake* and *Waterspout*.

It is so long since I have spoken of my family, that I hope it will not be deemed wholly uninteresting if I again recur to them, although the recurrence must be of a gloomy and melancholy nature. It was this year, 1813, that I lost my excellent brother and friend, Richard, who died at Kirby Lonsdale, in Westmoreland, of a paralytic affection. During the four previous years, my father, mother, my brother John, and poor faithful nurse Morgan, had all sunk into their graves; leaving me, my aunt Nowell,* and an amiable daughter of my brother John, the only survivors of our once numerous family.†—These, are to me most dreary, painful recollections; but, as I can not expect the reader will participate in those every day calamities,

* Between this affectionate relative and myself a long separation had occurred, owing to her having been one of those unfortunate *detenues*, so tyrannically confined by order of Buonaparte. In consequence, however, of Dr. Nowell having introduced vaccination into France, they were not hurried with the other *droves* of English to *Verdun*, but were allowed to reside in *Boulogne*; where, as a further proof of revolutionary gratitude, the constituted authorities placed over them two guards, whom they were compelled to house and to nourish; and who sent to prison, (in lieu of his master) my aunt's large favourite Newfoundland dog—proclaiming him, on account of his voraciousness, (during a period of dearth) a decided *Aristocrat*, and a conspirator against the republic.

† Now married to a very respectable London solicitor, Mr. Jopson.

ties, I will spare him and myself, and at once draw a veil over the melancholy subject.

On the 14th of October, 1812, owing to the zealous superintendence of the late Mr. Whitbread, the new Drury Lane Theatre was opened for the first time. The splendour of its decorations, the beauty of its staircase and saloon, excited universal admiration and approbation; but, such was the disproportionate, diminutive appearance of the stage, in comparison with the body of the theatre, that it was not unaptly compared to a small fire-place in a large drawing-room.

The opening address was written by Lord Byron, and well spoken by Mr. Elliston; but produced so little effect, that it was regretted by the laughter loving audience, that Mr. Arnold, the manager, had not substituted one of those humorous "*Rejected Addresses*," supposed to have been written by James and Horace Smith.

Though Mr. Whitbread had rescinded so many free admissions from various authors and editors, he very politely sent me mine; but to what cause does the classical reader imagine I was indebted for this compliment?—*Not to your comedies*, he will say.—No; not to them; but to a production quite as *natural*, though, perhaps, even still less classical,—to a *Newfoundland dog*, honest Carlo; who had “plucked up drowned honour by the locks,” and, during one whole year, maintained in Drury Lane, a *floating capital*.

During the year 1814, there appeared in the theatrical hemisphere, two stars of the first magnitude—stars do I call them?—*suns, moons, comets!* displaying *corruscations, scintillations, illuminations* and *halos*, hitherto unseen and unknown, among the *most heavenly bodies*;—their names were **KEAN** and **O'NEILL**. The *Shylock*, *Richard* and *Hamlet* of the *former*, were all pronounced to be equally *celestial*; and one of the most grave idolaters of the *latter*, demanded in print, why the actor who played *Romeo*, “to the divine *Julet*, did not imbibe a portion of that angelic lady's *ethereal fluid*?”

During the height of this mania, one of our young Westminster Hall orators, dining with Kean, and Lord ——, told this histrionic phenomenon among other compliments of a similar stamp, that he had never seen acting until the preceding evening.

"Indeed," said Kean, "why you must have seen others, Sir, I should conceive, in *Richard the Third*!"

"I have seen," replied the barrister, "both Cooke and Kemble; but they must excuse me, Mr. Kean, if I should turn from them, and frankly say to you, with *Hamlet*—'Here's metal more attractive.' "

Kean felt highly flattered, and begged to have the honour of drinking a glass of wine with his great legal admirer. The conversation then turning on a curious law suit that had been decided during the last western circuit, (and which circuit our barrister at that time went,) Kean after a pause, inquired whether he had ever visited the Exeter Theatre?

"Very rarely indeed," was the reply; "though, by the by, now I recollect, during the last assizes, I dropped in towards the conclusion of *Richard the Third*—*Richmond* was in the hands of a very promising young actor;—but, such a *Richard*!—such a harsh, croaking, barn brawler! I forget his name, but—"

"I'll tell it you," interrupted the Drury-Lane hero, rising, and tapping the great lawyer over the shoulder; "I'll tell it you,—KEAN!"

This naturally created a loud laugh, in which to his credit, Kean heartily joined; while the arch critic turned it off, by saying, "how much and how rapidly you have improved."

During my long theatrical experience, I have always observed, that, if the theatre be *badly* attended, the play is deemed *bad*, the actors *bad*, and the managers *bad*:—"all is out of joint." The house being only half filled on the night of Kean's first appearance in *Shylock*, though some few present might have thought he gave, for a young man, rather a promising delineation of the character, it was certainly not considered by the majority of spectators, by any means a very successful effort. However, on the following morning being supported by that great engine the press, (who *combined*, could prove me, at this present moment, to be both *young* and *handsome*,) up he mounted to celestial height; and though so hoarse, on the night of his second appearance, that his voice could scarcely be heard beyond the orchestra, he made a *hit* in the battle, (or rather, boxing match,) with *Richmond*, which secured to the old tragedy of *Richard the Third*, at least sixty repetitions to crowded audiences.

Sculptors, painters, and anatomists, now immediately discovered, that to the grace of Antinous, and the dignity of Apollo, Kean added the beauty of Adonis; thus equalling, if not surpassing in exaggeration, those hyper-panegyrics, which, sixty years ago, were even more prodigally lavished on that most popular hero, Wilkes; who, at that time, was so courted and admired, that many people actually thought him a *handsome* man. A laughable instance of these opinions is recorded. In a conversation between two of his followers at Guildhall, after two of the most effective speeches, one said to the other,

“Tom, what a fine, handsome fellow Master Wilkes is!”

“Handsome!” rejoined Tom, “nay, not much of that, for he *squints* most horribly.”

“Squints!” repeated the first speaker, examining Wilkes, with much attention; “why yes, to be sure he *squints* a little, but, confound you, not more than a *gentleman* ought to do!”

Where now is this idol, this second Wilkes, in popularity; where now is Kean?—*O semper instabile vulgus!* But without entering into the merits or demerits of the acting of this fallen favourite, I must avow, that in my humble opinion, he has lately been treated most harshly and unjustly—yet I venture to prophesy, if he return to England, he will return to regain all his former popularity.

Miss O'Neill made her first appearance, October the 14th, 1814. I witnessed both her rehearsal in the morning, and her performance in the evening. This young lady, in addition to a very pleasing person, and a good voice, possessed no doubt a considerable portion of feeling; but which, in my opinion, was of too boisterous and vehement a nature. In this judgment, however, I was again in the minority; for, by the verdict of the million, Miss O'Neill was pronounced a younger and a better Mrs. Siddons; and, lauded by the press, and supported with strong new afterpieces by the managers, during the whole of her first season, at the box-office “*the cry was, still they come.*”

Mr. Harris had engaged Miss O'Neill for three years, at a salary of sixteen pounds per week; but in consequence of her great success, at the end of a few weeks, he without any solicitation on her part, raised it most considerably; at the same time, presenting her with a costly diamond tiara, as an acknow-

ledgment of his sense of her exertions. From the day this lady commenced her theatrical career till she concluded it, she faithfully fulfilled her duty both towards the public and the manager; there, indeed, but in my opinion, *there* only resembling Mrs. Siddons; whom during a disastrous season at Drury Lane, I saw perform, even *Milwood*:—thus proudly exemplifying the axiom, that though *mediocre talent* is always struggling for the best part, *true genius* is not afraid to encounter the worst.

I only recollect two characters which Miss O'Neill refused; the one was *Mary Stuart*, in the tragedy of the same name, altered from Schiller; the other was *Imogen*. Regarding the performance of this latter character, Mr. Harris was most urgent in his requests; but nothing could induce Miss O'Neill to appear in boy's clothes. That there was no affectation or assumed delicacy in her decision, I am perfectly convinced; yet it should be remembered, that if every other actress were to indulge the same scrupulous feelings, not only *Cymbeline*, but, *As You Like it*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Philaster*, *The Country Girl*, and many other of our sterling plays, would never again be performed.

During this year, I was officially employed in Covent Garden Theatre; what was the name of my situation, however, I never could learn. Some called me “*whipper* in to the tragedians;” many “*ferret* to the painters and composers;” and others, “*maid of all work*” to the manager, who himself called me “*thinker*;” at the same time, kindly allowing me, without injury to my morals, to be a *free* thinker. But, though I can not attach a name to the officer, I can say something of the office, which certainly was no sinecure; having to suggest, or to execute, through the *whole* year, any project that might be conducive to the success of the *treasury*.

Notwithstanding I was engaged in such hard and active service, I can not but remember with a pleasure,—similar to that which the veteran feels in the recapitulation of his hard fought battles,—that perhaps no theatre ever enjoyed so much success, or realized so much profit, as did Covent Garden, during the twelve seasons succeeding its opening, in September, 1809. All the *eclat*, however, attached to this prosperous career, (as the late Mr. Harris had wholly seceded from the management,) must be attributed to its proper source—to the present Mr.

Harris; not one atom of it being due to his thinker; who, it should be remembered, was not in the cabinet during more than half of the above-mentioned period.

The *super-eminence* of this success may appear to some an untenable assertion; and to it may be opposed the “golden days of Garrick.” But though I have lived too long in the theatrical world to be ignorant that none can compete with the Roscius, *individually*, yet, I believe, even his most ardent admirers will acknowledge, that his company, during the most flourishing twelve years of his management, could never have vied *collectively* with that of Covent Garden. As a means of enabling others to form an unbiassed opinion on this subject, I will add a list of the principal performers attached at various periods to the company of Covent Garden Theatre, between the seasons of 1809, and that of 1821-2; which list being placed in *juxta-position* with that given by Davies, in his Life of Garrick, the vast difference in their respective strengths will easily be observed.

TRAGEDY.

Messrs. Kemble, Cooke, Macready, Young, C. Kemble, Conway, Betty, Terry, Abbott, Egerton, and Barrymore: Mesdames Siddons, O'Neill, Bunn, Powell, Smith, and Faucit.—

COMEDY.

Messrs. Munden, J. Johnstone, Liston, Jones, C. Kemble, W. Farren, Fawcett, Mathews, Blanchard, Terry, Emery, Farley, Yates, Tokeley, and Simmons: Mesdames Jordan, Davison, O'Neill, Brunton, Gibbs, Clara Fisher, C. Kemble, H. Johnstone, Foote, and Davenport.

OPERA.

Messrs. Braham, Incledon, Sinclair, Bellamy, Phillips, Pyne, Broadhurst, Taylor, Hunt, and Duruset: Mesdames Catalani, Dickons, Stephens, Tree, Bolton, Feron, Mathews, Carew, Liston, Hallande, and Love.

PANTOMIME AND BALLET.

Messrs. Noble, Byrne, Farley, Grimaldi, sen. Grimaldi, jr. Bologna, Norman and Ellar: Mesdames Lupino, Parker, Searle, Adams, Dennetts, &c.

Now it must be obvious to the least initiated in the mysteries of the theatrical arcana, that to keep in action and effective service, this vast body of conjoined talent, with all its concomitant and heavy train of dependent machinery, can be no very easy task; a task indeed, requiring such constant exertion, tact and expense, that it should be experienced, before its difficulties can be duly appreciated—*Fit fabricando faber.*

One cause (amongst many others) of Mr. Harris's success, was the just value he set on dramatic writers—wisely rewarding and encouraging them as material movers of the grand machine,—on the principle, that *new* plays with the established company, were less expensive, and more productive than *old* plays with *stars*. My friend, George Colman, when manager, always acted on the same fair principle; and whether the novelty was written by himself or by any other person, the author regularly received equal support and remuneration.

The expenses of Covent Garden Theatre, during these seasons, may be stated to have averaged three hundred pounds per night, for two hundred nights; an immense sum, to which an equivalent income was only to be produced, by a bold, active, liberal and skilful system of management. Whether the management of this period was, or was not of this nature, will, I imagine, be most satisfactorily deduced from a statement of its results; if it failed, fault may be attached to it, but, if it succeeded, an opposite opinion ought in justice to be inferred: without further preface then, its receipts during those years, amounted to little short of one MILLION pounds sterling,—thus averaging above *eighty thousand pounds, each season!*

The largest annual receipt ever taken at this, or no doubt at any other theatre, was in the season of 1810–11; when one *hundred thousand* pounds were received at the doors. It is a curious fact, and somewhat indicative of the anomalous nature of the public taste, that the whole of the additional sum, over the usual annual receipts, was entirely produced by the introduction of cavalry on the stage; an exhibition now so much and so violently censured. The first forty-one nights of *Blue Beard*, revived with the horses, produced above *twenty-one thousand* pounds. I will now, however, abandon this retrospective view, which, as it relates so materially to a portion of my theatrical life, can not be called a digression, and proceed to

the last years of my dramatic existence, or, to what may be more properly called, my *theatrical death*.

Shakspeare's divine drama of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, not having been acted since the year 1763, and then, only twice, Mr. Henry Harris thought with me, that, with certain alterations and additions, it might be rendered a most productive and effective revival. One cause of its failure on its last representation was, perhaps, the emptiness of the house; a circumstance, as has been before stated, usually generative of dullness and discontent; and, on the present occasion, from some strange chance or caprice, the benches were so uncommonly empty, that, when *Lysander*, *Helena*, *Demetrius*, and *Hermia*, fell asleep on the stage, the whole of the pit, another *quartetto*, nodded and dozed in sympathetic accordance.

It would be almost libellous to suppose that Garrick and Colman could have been concerned in this flimsy alteration; for, could they have introduced *Quince*, *Bottom*, and the other "hard handed men of Athens," always to talk of their intended representation of a play, and then never *represent it*? Whether my alteration in 1816, of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, possessed more or less merit, than that of 1764, I can not presume to determine; but, that it was more successful, may, without vanity be inferred, as it was performed during the first season twenty nights.

When Miller, the bookseller, at the second rehearsal of this piece, gave me one hundred pounds for the copyright of it, and bound himself to pay me another fifty pounds, conditionally, I almost fancied that Shakspeare stood frowning before me, and that I heard him mutter, "Why, you modern dramatist, are you not ashamed to get out of my brains, more money by one play, than the original ever gained by five?" I was ashamed; but, I am afraid, for no very considerable length of time; as it will be seen, that very soon afterwards, with the same unblushing impudence, I again began to draw large draughts on the *Stratford-on-Avon bank*.

According to the plan proposed in the commencement of this book, I can not criticise the acting of any performer in this revival, with the exception of poor Emery; whose rich delineation of *Quince* of *Caliban*, and of *Sir Toby Belch*, falsified decidedly the opinion of a low critical theatrical Irishman; who (having seen a favourite actor produce no effect in

one of Shakspeare's characters) thus archly addressed me: "I say now, Mr. Author, it is all very well with these performers, you see, in *common* plays—such, as your own, for instance; but, when they get within the clutches of *Billy*, eh! by the powers, it is all *clane* another sort o' thing."

Being now compelled daily, to taste more and more of the sweets of management, I began to perceive that a manager's fate is even more precarious than that of an author. If the playwright have a play fail, he only loses his time: but if the proprietor have a season fail, he may lose all the principal he has advanced, and his liberty into the bargain. Then, within and without the walls of his theatre, he has a host of unavoidable enemies, at the head of whom, first in inveteracy and in injury, I name—Snow! which steady friend to surgeons, is indeed a *slippery* foe to managers, ruining horses, fracturing the limbs of pedestrians, and imprisoning the most theatrical within the limits of their comfortable fire-sides. In the way of friends, his best is *Harlequin*, who conjures forth, not only hosts of holiday school-boys and girls, but grandfathers and grandmothers, and whole families of "children of a larger growth," who attempt to conceal their own ungovernable *penchant* towards this *infra dig.* exhibition, under the pretext of seeing how much the little Tommies and little Betsies are amused. I have frequently known one baby bring a party of twenty babies, to witness the representation of this illegitimate drama; yet, in spite of his mighty general attraction, *Harlequin*, like another great magician, (Buonaparte,) has been defeated, during his winter campaign, by that above-mentioned formidable enemy—Snow.

On the 16th of September, 1816, Mr. Macready made a most successful first appearance in *Orestes*—in this case, I much regret that my self-imposed rule precludes me from pursuing the subject.*

Mr. Harris, senior, had formerly been so delighted with Shuter, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Humerous Lieutenant*, that he wished the character to be restored to the stage; and thought, that, in the hands of Liston, it might again become

* Speaking of *Orestes*, I take this opportunity to remark, that, a whole length portrait of Mr. Macready in that character, by Mr. John Boaden, evinced one of the first promises of this young artist's present success.

popular. I hastily commenced an alteration, and as hastily concluded it, aided with those two effective co-operators, *paste and scissors*.—"Do nothing in thine anger," is a true and ancient aphorism.—"Do nothing in a hurry, *except catch fleas*," is a true, though almost forgotten proverb, revived by the original and eccentric Doctor Kitchiner; but, regardless of both, in the hope of paying Christmas bills, I proceeded in my task, as fast as pen could execute it, and the result was, that, on the fourth night, the *Humorous*, or, as the newspapers called him, the *Dull Lieutenant* was regularly drummed out of the garrison.

Though, however, I did not follow Doctor Kitchiner's advice on this occasion, I have on others; and whilst many praise him as astronomer, optician and musician, my health has been so materially benefited by his advice, that I, amongst others, must also laud him as physician,—not as Doctor Sangrado; no, on the contrary, as Doctor *Stimulant*; and the patient, who like me wishes to adopt the motto of "*Dum vivimus vivamus*," had better abandon the starving system, and take a new lease, by following the prescriptions of this rational and entertaining promoter of the "Art of prolonging life."

To spare my reader the fatigue of another tedious individual recapitulation, I will again class a number of my dramatic productions, in the gross; of which, though none were decidedly damned, their success was of a most equivocal nature.

What's a Man of Fashion? a farce.

The Duke of Savoy, a musical play.*

The Father and his Children, a melo-drama.

The Illustrious Traveller, a melo-drama.

The Burgomaster of Saardam, a melo-drama.

* A whimsical circumstance occurred during the last rehearsal but one, of this play. On my being asked suddenly for the motto of the *House of Savoy*, for the purpose of the initials being painted and conspicuously displayed on the banners, similar to the Roman example, "*Senatus populusque Romanus*,"

S. P. Q. R.

I hastily and inadvertently gave the painter the following *Motto*,
" *Beneficia ultra mortem.*"

He as hastily fixed on the banners the initials; which, to our dismay and astonishment, we read in large golden letters, just before the rising of the curtain.

So many of Shakspeare's fine comedies having been performed no more than once, in two or three seasons, and others having been altogether withdrawn from the stage, I thought, as in the instance of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, that they might be again restored to it (with the assistance of a few alterations, and the addition of music,) advantageously to the managers, and without injury to the immortal bard. The introduction too of Shakspeare's own lyrical compositions into these pieces,—as most of them had never been sung on the stage,—gave a most promising appearance to this rich Shakespearean treat; for, such it may surely be called, as the additions were almost exclusively selected from his own “native wood notes wild.” Yet I was censured as an interpolater, and the manager pronounced a mountebank, because he allowed Shakspeare's comedies to be converted into operas. But as our inspired poet's partiality for music is so evident (by his introduction of it, not only in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *As you like it*, and in *The Tempest*, but in most of his tragic and comic plays) we have reason to presume, that, since I did not mar the regular disposition of his fable, Shakspeare would have regarded this musical arrangement, this restoration of his sonnets, rather as an *embellishment* to, than as a *mutilation* of, his pieces.

As a proof that these beautiful comedies, on their revival in this manner, were no longer found to be devoid of attraction, I trust that I may be allowed to enumerate the number of nights they were performed, during the first and second seasons of their appearance;—

Comedy of Errors, forty nights, first and second season.

Twelfth Night, twenty-five nights, ditto.

Two Gentlemen of Verona, thirty-five nights, ditto.

Tempest, with additional songs and dialogue, fifteen nights, ditto.

Merry Wives of Windsor, thirty-two nights, ditto.*

I tried this new system also with Beaumont and Fletcher, and having altered *The Chances*, it was produced under the title of *Don John, or the Two Violettes*; but, though the mu-

* To these may be added the second part of *Henry the Fourth*, to which was added occasional dialogue, and music for the purpose of introducing the “Coronation.”

sic was composed by Bishop, (who had been previously so triumphantly successful in the Shakspearean plays) after being performed twenty nights, with a very lukewarm attraction, *Don John* quietly returned to “the peaceful grave.”

I am now approaching an æra, which may be called the grand climacteric of my theatrical life; for the same sort of revolution, which is said to occur at a particular age in the physical, certainly happened in my dramatic constitution: I allude to the period when Henry Harris resigned the possession and management of Covent Garden Theatre.

Mr. Harris, senior, died on the 1st of October, 1820; a gentleman of whom it may be truly recorded, in the words of his epitaph,

“That, in directing the complicated concerns of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, he merited and enjoyed, during more than half a century, the approbation and esteem of the public; and mingled so much benevolence with justice towards the numerous individuals under his control, that whilst he commanded their respect as a manager, he gained their attachment as a friend.”

To the whole of Mr. Harris’s shares (seven-twelfths) in Covent Garden Theatre, Henry Harris succeeded: to the respect and attachment of the performers he likewise succeeded. But to one thing he, unfortunately, did not succeed; an agreement, by which Mr. Thomas Harris enjoyed the *whole* and *sole* management of Covent Garden Theatre, totally independent of all interference on the part of Mr. Kemble, and the other minor proprietors. As one, amongst many other proofs, of the late Mr. Harris’s possession of this *paramount* power, I can mention that, in July 1810, Mr. Kemble applied for a large increase of salary, which Mr. Harris, in a firm, manly letter, decidedly refused; and the actor (without further application) submitting to the manager’s decision, continued to perform on the same terms.

On the death of Mr. Harris, Mr. Kemble returning from Lausanne (where he had chiefly resided since his retirement from the stage) presented his share (one sixth) in the concern, to his brother, Mr. C. Kemble. Soon after that gentleman became a proprietor, differences arose between him and Mr. H. Harris; who, convinced that no theatre could flourish under the direction of a committee, refused to manage jointly

with the minor proprietors (Messrs. Forbes, Willet, and C. Kemble,) but granted them a lease for ten years. From some cause, why or wherefore, I know not, this matter has been a long time in that court, where it will happen that *some* suitors daily walk up and down, saying with Sterne's starling, "I can't get out;" but, as the case is still before the Lord Chancellor, and frequently before the public, any comment of mine would be superfluous.

The last time I saw Mr. Kemble, was at the rehearsal of *Twelfth Nights*, in its altered state. He seated himself in the Prompter's chair—expressed no indignation at my *operatizing* Shakspeare—spoke very highly of Miss M. Tree's singing and acting—corrected Emery in the text of *Sir Toby*, and then abruptly left the stage, saying "The *physique* is gone." He died about two years afterwards at Lausanne; and whilst his private virtues endeared him to his family and friends, his talents, as an actor, were so splendid, that in my opinion he, like Garrick, will for *ever* be considered a *national* loss.

On the 23rd of March, 1822, Mr. Henry Harris resigned his management, and on the same day, I sent in my resignation, though I did not leave without regret a concern to which I had been attached during a period of more than forty years: where, almost from boyhood, I had lived in good fellowship with not only the managers but with the performers; and where, if I live to again see Mr. Harris in possession, I may, *Sub auspice Teucro*, successfully "fight all my battles o'er again."

My life now became a life of indolence, and consequently, to me, who had been accustomed to constant occupation, a life of discomfort. I struggled through one year by lounging over a new play,* and wandering about the Isle of Wight; but, on my return to town, worn by *ennui*, and requiring my usual theatrical income, I acceded to a proposal (made through that active, valuable treasurer, Mr. Dunn,) from Mr. Elliston, and thus became a part of the Drury Lane Cabinet. My employments at this theatre, however, were not wholly similar to those I had fulfilled at Covent Garden; for owing to my in-

* This piece was intended for the Haymarket, and had it been finished, I should have presented it to my old acquaintance Morris; but, alas! in its infancy it "died and made no sign."

creasing lameness, arising from gout, it was stipulated in the agreement, that my duties were to be confined to my own house: and thus, in the words of the auctioneers, and their advertisements, "*I was agreeably removed from the turnpike road.*"

Mahomet, therefore, was compelled to come to the mountain, as the mountain could not go to Mahomet; and I must add, that Mahomet never came once too often; for how Mr. Elliston has, as a manager, conducted himself towards others, I can not pretend to determine, but I know, during our whole intercourse, I found him not only gentlemanly and entertaining, but (to speak in the language of an old cricketer) regularly "*a safe wicket.*" I believe even his worst enemies must allow that Elliston is no *Jesuit*, a character, which though of rare occurrence in the theatrical world, is yet occasionally to be discovered there.

Owing to the strength of the company, the success of various novelties, particularly *The Cataract of the Ganges*, and the revival of *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the latter of which was considerably forwarded and aided by the active exertions of the stage manager Mr. Bunn, Drury Lane during this season (1823-4) was uncommonly successful. Before the commencement of the management of the spirited lessee, the stage and the space behind the scenes were so contracted, that Drury Lane had long been proved totally incapable of maintaining a successful contest with Covent Garden in its strong hold, *spectacle*. Previously, however, to the period when I was concerned in the management, Elliston, at an enormous expense, having overcome this difficulty, he now entered the splendid lists, and conquered.*

The architect under whose directions these material alterations in the Theatre were so skilfully effected, was Mr. Beazley. Mr. Harris also selected him for the building of the new Theatre in Dublin; and to the liberality of the proprietor, and to the taste and talent of Mr. Beazley, the inhabitants of that city are indebted for one of the most grand and perfect Theatres in the united kingdom.

* Still Covent Garden from its spacious stage, and various other capabilities, will (under good management) in my opinion, always have the advantage.

As my readers may *possibly* have been amused with the anecdotes of several of my friends; and therefore become sufficiently interested, to wish to know their fates, I trust I may be allowed briefly to state, that Andrews died, after a severe illness, in Cleveland Row, in the month of June, having bequeathed legacies to several of his friends, and the bulk of his very large fortune to his relative, Frederick Pigou:—that Merry died in America, in 1801, and that Holman also died there in 1817:—that John Tufton died in Argyle-street, in 1802, and Twisleton in Ceylon, in 1824:—and that “last, not least” in my recollections, and in my esteem, Topham, who,—though his life had been saved, whilst on a visit to Mr. Pigou, by that eminent surgeon, Mr. Brodie,—on his return to Yorkshire, unfortunately encountering a relapse, after a long struggle which he bore with extraordinary fortitude and patience, terminated his existence at Doncaster, in April 1820. He bequeathed the bulk (if not the whole) of his property to her, in whom he had so long and safely confided—his daughter, Mrs. Forde Bowes; appointing his friend, and son-in-law, the Rev. T. F. Forde Bowes his executor.—So that now but for a small circle of old friends, and my own family, I might say with Dr. Johnson,

“The success or miscarriage of this work, are to me empty sounds, since most of those whom I have wished to please, have sunk into the grave.”

During the following summer, I went to Boulogne for the benefit of my health, and for a time corresponded with Mr. Elliston relative to the ensuing campaign. The fine sea breezes of this cheerful French town, united to the thorough change of scene, produced such invigorating effects on my debilitated frame, that I began most sanguinely to anticipate the re-establishment of my health; when, one day after taking an agreeable walk with my brother dramatist Poole and Mr. Grattan, author of *High-ways and By-ways*, sitting on the pier I saw a drowned body borne along the sands, followed by numbers of persons. The crowd gradually moved towards the town, and to my horror and astonishment, approached my residence, a cottage on the sea shore. I saw the body conveyed into it, and before I could arrive, was informed by some harbingers of ill, who hastened to meet me, that the unfortunate object of so much humane exertion, was my second son, Rich-

ard, who, whilst bathing, had advanced beyond his depth, and being unable to swim, had sunk to the bottom. Luckily, the tide was coming in, and the body occasionally rising to the surface, was observed, by a kind Englishman, Mr. Cheek, who, aided by a gallant Frenchman, M. Jolly, they at the hazard of both their lives, succeeded in dragging my poor son to the shore. Animation being totally suspended, the eyes fixed, and no pulsation apparent, it was generally supposed that the vital spark was extinct; but, by the kind activity and prompt assistance of the before-mentioned gentlemen and others, the body was immediately carried home; where, by medical aid and the means usually employed on such occasions, in less than an hour, to the joy of all, the supposed lost patient breathed, and spoke!—Dr. Millingen was the successful physician on the occasion.

I should add, that M. Jolly and Mr. Cheek, on this same occasion, also rescued from a “watery grave,” a grandson of Baron Garrow, Mr. S. Lettsom, my son’s companion, while bathing. In praise of these intrepid preservers, I could fill pages; but, as it is, I will confine my expressions of gratitude within a narrower compass, and simply say, “with my whole heart I thank them!”

In course, with nerves so shattered as mine then were, this shock, that, at any period of my life would have been terrible, was felt with peculiar acuteness, and from that day my health rapidly declining, I was compelled to write to Mr. Elliston, and state my utter inability to retain any longer, my official situation in Drury Lane Theatre. A similar communication I was also obliged to forward to the lessee of the Dublin Theatre, Mr. Abbot; a gentleman, whose interests, under any other circumstances, it would have been my pleasure and my pride to have endeavoured to forward and assist.

To add to those “natural shocks which flesh is heir to,” on our arrival in London, we found a letter written in high spirits from my wife’s brother, (then residing in Yorkshire) announcing his intention of immediately paying a visit to his sister—but heaven had ordained otherwise—he was seized on the road from Doncaster, with a fit of apoplexy, and died at Wansford: poor Mansel!—a better fellow never existed!

With my letters from Boulogne, terminated my *dramatic* life—a life of incessant labour, struggle and uncertainty, during

more than forty years. Having adopted this precarious profession before I was nineteen, and pursued it with industry and perseverance till sixty; and having annually produced one or two pieces, almost all of which were successful, it is true, that I have received from theatres a sum, hitherto unequalled in the history of dramatic writing; namely, *above nineteen thousand pounds*. “Oh ho!—then, after all, you are *really* the rich Mr. Reynolds!”—say the splenetic. By your leaves, gentlemen, perhaps you will be kind enough to remember what the late Lord Kenyon said; “An author’s is a sort of *hand to mouth* profession.” At least I found it so from woful experience; for, having lost almost the whole of my hereditary, I was compelled to support myself and wife, and children, principally on my theatrical income; which, when it is recollected that *nineteen thousand* pounds was the *sole* gain of *forty* long laborious years, will be found to be of no very *redundant* nature.

Besides, I, like others, have had my losses and crosses; and now, having been omitted from many wills on account of my supposed wealth, I hope this true and faithful exposition of the real state of my finance, may catch the eye of some rich testator, and induce him to make me reparation, by bequeathing me a “*thumping*” legacy.

“And here, gentle reader,” in the words of Fielding, “we are arrived at the last stage of our long journey. As we have travelled together through so many pages, let us behave to one another, like fellow travellers in a stage coach; who have passed several days in company, and who, notwithstanding any bickerings, or little animosities, which have occurred on the road, generally make up all in the end, and mount for the last time into their vehicle, with cheerfulness and good humour; since, after this one stage, it may possibly happen to us, as it commonly happens to them, never to meet again”—therefore, my friends—

“VALETE AC PLAUDITE.”

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